# AN ENQUIRY AFTER HAPPINESS.

## VOL. I.

By the Author of the *PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY.*

Κενὸς ἐκεῖνος φιλοσόφου λόγος, ὑφ' οὗ μηδὲν ἀνθρώπου πάθος διεφθάρται, ὥσπερ γὰρ ἰατρικῆς οὐκ ὄφελος, μὴ τὰς νόσους ἐκβαλλούσης ἀπὸ τῶν σωμάτων, οὕτως οὐδὲ φιλοσοφίας εἰ μὴ τὸ τῆς ψυχῆς κακὸν ἐκδιώκοι. Pythag. apud Stob. Serm. 80.

*Qui quod tibi parum videtur Eruditus, ea Causa est quod nullam Eruditionem esse duxit, nisi quæ Beatæ vitæ Disciplinam juvaret.* Cic. de Finib. Bonor. & Mal.

*LONDON,*
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To my Worthy Friend

# Mr. William Powell,

Rector of *Llan-Wennarth*, &c.

My Dear Friend,

WHom neither thy Proſperity nor my Affliction has ever divided from me, it has ever been your good Fortune (and your Mind has ever been better than your Fortune) from the firſt Day of our Friendſhip to ſtand upon the higher Ground, and to have always been doing Kindneſſes, and never needed any. I will confeſs if you will Pardon me that I have ſometimes ſecretly repin'd at this thy good luck and envied the Ho-

nour and the Pleaſure which this Advantage gave you, and can you blame me ſince it excluded me from a ſhare in one of the moſt raviſhing Delights of Friendſhip? You know what Attempts I have made to redeem this Inequality, but all in vain till now: Now I flatter my ſelf that I have found a Preſent to make you that cannot provoke your Generoſity tho' it were Nicer and more ſcrupulous than 'tis; I have now at length found a way to End moſt happily, the only Difference that ever has been between us in an uninterrupted Friendſhip of near Seventeen years: You ſhall always be Fortunate, always able to do Kindneſſes, and be in need of none; and

and I will always ſtrive to vanquiſh and ſurmount all the Diſadvantages of my Fortune, and in deſpite of them find ſome way to expreſs my Affection, and return your Obligations. And thus if I fall not ſhort of my Deſign, I ſhall be equal with you; for 'tis no ſmall Service I propoſe to do you, I will now be your Guide, I will Conduct you not as you have done me (tho' for that too I muſt ever thank you) through barren and impoveriſh't *Piccardy*, but through all the Ways of *Pleaſantneſs*, and all the Paths of *Peace*. I will give you a Sight not of *France*, but *Canaan*; I will make you a ſharer of that Immortality which I aſpir'd to, and bring you to

that Heaven which is the Sacred Abode of Sacred Friendſhip, and Sacred Joys. What a Dark Cottage, what a Rude Heap will the now-Admir'd *Verſailles* then ſeem to you! But ſee whither I have ſuffer'd this Paſſion to tranſport me? how eaſie is it for one that follows the Conduct of Affection to be rather *Obliging* than *Diſcreet!* I had al-almoſt forgot how little you ſtand in need of theſe kind of Helps, being not only a ſufficient Guide to your Self, but a Prudent and Succeſsful one to others in the Way to Happineſs: however though you need no Guide, I may ſerve you as the Companion of your Journey, *I* may 'wake you in a Morning, I may oblige you to quicken your pace,

pace, and I may Entertain you with Reflexions and Remarks upon the Countrey as we paſs, and ever and anon mind you of the Beauty and the Pleaſures of that Countrey we Travel to; theſe and ſuch like Aſſiſtances the moſt Perfect need, theſe are the Offices of the trueſt Friendſhip, and theſe the Papers I ſend you, may I hope in ſome meaſure perform. Adieu,

*Thy Affectionate*

R. L.

TO

# TO THE READER.

*IT has pleas'd God that in a few Years I ſhould finiſh the more pleaſant, and delightful part of Life, if Senſe were to be the Judge, and Standard of Pleaſure; being confin'd (I will not ſay condemn'd) by well-nigh utter Blindneſs to Retirement, and Solitude. In this ſtate Converſation has loſt much of it's former air, and briskneſs; Buſineſs (wherein I could never pretend to any great Addreſs) gives me now more trouble than formerly; and that too without the uſual diſpatch or ſucceſs: Study (which is the only Employment left me) is clog'd with this Weight and Incumbrance, that all the Aſſiſtance I can receive from without, muſt be convey'd by another's Senſes not my own; which it may eaſily be believ'd, are Inſtruments, or Organs as ill fitted and as awkwardly manag'd by me, as*

*as wooden Legs, or Hands by the Maim'd.*

*In this Caſe, ſhould I affect to procure my ſelf a decent Funeral, and leave an Honorable Remembrance of me behind; ſhould I ſtruggle to Reſcue my ſelf from that Contempt to which this Condition (wherein I may ſeem loſt to the World, and my ſelf) expoſes me; ſhould I ambitiouſly affect to have my Name march in the train of thoſe All (tho' not all equally) great ones,* Homer, Appius, Cn. Aufidius, Didymus, Walkup, Pere Jean l'aveugle, *&c. All of them eminent for their ſervice and uſefulneſs, as well as for their affliction of the ſame kind with mine; Even this might ſeem almoſt a Commendable Infirmity, for the laſt thing a Mind truly great, and Philoſophical puts off, is the Deſire of Glory: Hence* Tacitus *cloſes his Divine Character of* Helvidius Priſcus *thus,* Erant quibus appetentior fama videretur, quando etiam ſapientibus cupido gloriæ noviſſima exuitur: *But this Treatiſe oweth neither its Conception, nor Birth to this Principle; for beſides that I know my own Inſufficiency too well,*

*Tacit. Hiſt. l. 4.*

*to*

*to flatter my ſelf with the hopes of a Romantick Immortality from any performance of mine in this Ingenious, and Learned Age; I muſt confeſs I never had a Soul great enough to be acted by the Heroic heat which the love of Fame and Honour hath kindled in ſome.*

——Tuta & parvula laudo.

*I have ever lov'd the Security and Contentment of Privacy and Retirement almoſt to the guilt of Singularity, and Affectation.*

*But the truth is plainly this, the Vigour and Activity of my Mind, the health and ſtrength of my body (being now in the flower of my Age) continuing unbroken, unbent under this Affliction; I found that if I did not provide ſome Imployment that might Entertain my Mind, it would weary out it ſelf with fruitleſs Deſires of and Vain Attempts after its wonted Objects, and ſo that Strength and Vivacity of Nature which ſhould render my ſtate more Comfortable, would make it much more Intolerable.*

*I confeſs my Zeal for Public Good by the Propagation and Endearment of Divine*

*Divine Truths was leſs fervent in me, than could well become the particular Obligations of my Profeſſion; or the Common ones which every Chriſtian in proportion to his Talents lies under; I was almoſt induced to believe, that this Chaſtiſement which had remov'd me from the Service of the Altar, did at the ſame time diſcharge me from all Duty owing to the Public; But my good Friend Mr.* Lamb *reviv'd the Dying ſparks of a decaying Zeal, and reſtor'd me to a proper ſenſe of my Duty in this Point; for whether by Deſign or by Providence governing Chance, I know not, (for he never ſeem'd to addreſs or deſign the Diſcourſe particularly to me) he had ever and anon in his mouth this Excellent Principle,* That the life of Man is to be eſtimated by its uſefulneſs and ſerviceableneſs in the World. *A ſober reflection upon this wrought me up to a Reſolution ſtrong enough to contemn all the Difficulties which the loſs of my Sight could repreſent to me in an Enterprize of this Nature. Thus you ſee on what Principles I became engag'd in this Work; I thought it my Duty to ſet my*

*my ſelf ſome Task which might ſerve at once to divert my Thoughts from a melancholy Application on my Misfortune, and Entertain my Mind with ſuch a Rational Employment as might render me moſt eaſie to my ſelf, and moſt ſerviceable to the World. Being now abundantly convinc'd that I am not releas'd from that Duty I owe that Body of which I am ſtill a Member, by being cut off from a great part of the Pleaſures and Advantages of it; therefore like one that truely loves his Countrey, when no way elſe is left him, he fights for't on his ſtumps, ſo will I even in the Remains of a broken body expreſs at leaſt my affection for Mankind, and breath out my laſt Gaſp in their Service.*

*The fitneſs, and tendency of this ſubject to ſerve theſe Ends is ſo apparent, that I will not impertinently detain the Reader by a Juſtification of this Choice. How fit I am for it, will be beſt judg'd by the Performance; yet that this may not ſuffer any Diſadvantage from ſuch Prejudices with which the Conſideration of my ſtate may eaſily prepoſſeſs Men,*

*Men, I think my ſelf oblig'd to ſome ſort of Juſtification of my ſelf.*

*I have had ſo much Experience of all the ſeveral Pleaſures that Proſperity can afford Man in this life, that I am ſufficiently Capable of ſetting a true Rate and Value upon them; and of judging their Subſerviency to true Happineſs: And I am ſo well acquainted with Trouble and Affliction, that I am ſufficiently ſenſible, as of the weakneſs of Humane Nature and Miſery of this Mortal ſtate; ſo of the Neceſſity, and Power of Vertue in Relieving and Supporting Man under both: And after all, my Mind lives now in the Body (like a Soul in a ſeparate ſtate) retir'd as from the Pleaſures, ſo from the Troubles of the World, and is therefore the more able to paſs a free, and more diſpaſſionate Judgment upon both.*

*It may probably be fear'd that the ſame ſhould befall me, which has many* Monkiſh *Writers, who being much retir'd from the World, having much leiſure and few Books, did ſpin out every Subject into wandring Mazes, and airy Speculations, like Plants which deſti-*

*tute*

*tute of a well manur'd and fat ſoil run all into the Exuberancy of Leaves and fruitleſs Sprigs: but the Commerce I ſtill maintain with the World may in part prevent this Errour, and the Nature of the Subject ſo fruitful of many Neceſſary Enquiries will of it ſelf lead me on to uſeful and profitable Thoughts.*

*There is one thing which may be by ſome objected againſt my manner of treating this Subject, the freedom I uſe in it; being not altogether ſo common to my Profeſſion; but I hope it will not be found that I have abus'd the Liberty I have taken to the Diſparagement of t'e leaſt Truth of our Religion, or to the leaſt Diſcouragement of Vertue; and therefore I think it cannot juſtly reflect any Diſadvantage upon my Calling.*

*Beſides I have in a former Treatiſe wherein I deſign'd the ſame End,* The Happineſs of Mankind, *treated this Subject in a manner ſuited to the generality of Readers: but this Diſcourſe I deſign for ſuch who are not content to ſubmit to Inferences deduc'd from Receiv'd Principles, unleſs they can be fairly*

*Convin'd of the Reaſonableneſs and Truth of the Principles themſelves: nor ſhould I think it any Crime, were I Maſter of ſuch Talents, if I did mingle with Neceſſary Truths all that variety of Thought, all that fineneſs and briskneſs of fancy which might render them as delightful as uſeful, the Example of God himſelf in the great Work of the Creation would juſtifie this Liberty, who has Created as well Leaves and Flowers, as Herbs and Fruit, and in the variety and beauty, in the Colours and figures of all that he has produc'd; he appears plainly to have made proviſion not only to feed the Appetite, but even the fancies of his Creatures.*

*There is after all I confeſs one thing that ſtands in need of an Excuſe, which is the publiſhing what ſhould come forth a juſt Treatiſe by ſmall Parts; to this I may truly ſay, having laid together all the Materials I ſaw neceſſary to compleat this Diſcourſe, I found it grown unavoidably to that Voluminous Bulk, that I took this Method partly out of compliance to the Eaſe of my Reader, but eſpecially in compliance*

*to*

*to my own; for in my preſent Circumſtances I ſaw no other way to avoid that Confuſion which would inevitably have diſorder'd the Contexture of a long Diſcourſe, if I ſhould have charged my Memory with the Contrivance and Connexion of ſo many, and various Parts at once: and I foreſaw that all the Strength of my Mind, which ſhould be collected and united in the treating every ſingle Argument would be unprofitably ſpent in diſtracted, divided, and imperfect Efforts.*

# THE INTRODUCTION OR A Brief Scheme of the Deſign OF THE Whole WORK.

TO inform Man what is his true, and proper Happineſs, and to mark out before him the Right way to it hath been, and ever muſt be the aim of all Philoſophy and all Religion: and yet ſo numerous have been and are the Diſputes on this Subject, and ſo ſeemingly inſuperable the difficulties which encounter us in every way, that the *Deſpair* of attaining Happineſs at leaſt in this World ſeems almoſt as Univerſal, as the *Deſire* of it: and as Nature will never give o're the purſuit of it, ſo will Man never forbear the Tragical Complaints of his Diſappointments, and the raving Exagge-

Exaggerations of Humane Misery. That therefore I may attempt at least to treat this Subject satisfactorily, I will endeavour,

§. 1. To shew you, That Happiness is not a mere airy and imaginary Notion, but is a real state, and really attainable; and that our Disappointments and Unsuccessfulness must be imputed to our selves, and this shall be the work of this present Volume.

§. 2. To Explain the Nature of Happiness, to Examine wherein it consists, and what is the high-way to it: in which to proceed successfully, I thought the plainest Method I could take would be this, To fix and define the Notion of the most absolute and Compleat Happiness, that so we might discern what it behov'd us to aim at, and how near we could approach the Perfection of Happiness. Now the most perfect Idæa of Happiness that the Mind of Man can frame is this, *Happiness is the state of a perfect Being in the unmixt, uninterrupted, and Eternal*

*Eternal Enjoyment of the moſt perfect Pleaſure*; Such I conceive to be the Happineſs of God himſelf: In this Definition there are Three Parts which manifeſtly appear to be the Ingredients of a Divine Happineſs. Firſt, Perfection of Being: Secondly, Freedom from Trouble: Thirdly, Eternal Enjoyment of the moſt perfect Pleaſure. It is therefore now Evident that to diſcover the Nature of Humane Happineſs and the way to it, I am oblig'd to Diſcourſe.

1. *Of the Being of Man, and its Perfection.*
2. *Of Indolence or freedom from Pain or Trouble.*
3. *Of Fruition or the Enjoyment of Pleaſure.*

Each of which ſhall be the Subject of a diſtinct Volume; and becauſe there may ſome Queſtions ariſe of a more general Nature; ſuch as, whether every Man's particular Happineſs ought to be dearer to him than the Happineſs of another? or whatever elſe can be imagin'd. Secondly, On ſuppoſal, that

that an Entire Happineſs cannot be attain'd, what part then of it ought to be preferr'd? and ſuch like. I will therefore,

§. 3. Aſſign a particular Volume for the Diſcuſſion of ſuch Queſtions, and the Eſtabliſhment of ſuch Inferences, as will naturally reſult from the former Diſcourſes.

*ERRATA.*

## *ERRATA.*

PAg. 77. lin. 12. for *them* read *him*, p. 135. l. 3. omit *ſo*, p. 148. l. 4. for *tutelary* r. *tutelar*, p. 159. l. 27. omit *only*, l. 28. for *as* r. *then*, p. 308. l. 7. for *times* r. *time*.

AN

# AN Enquiry after Happineſs.

## Part I.

Contains three Chapters:

*The Firſt, Treats of the Motives to this Enquiry, and Objections againſt it. The Second, of the Poſſibility of attaining Happineſs. The Third, of the Cauſes of our ill Succeſs, and Diſappointments in our purſuit of it.*

### CHAP. I.

*Of the Motives to this Enquiry, and of the Objections which may be form'd againſt it.*

*The Importance. The Neceſſity of it.*

The Objections are, *Firſt*, Happineſs is not attainable; and therefore Enquiries after it are to no purpoſe.

*Secondly*, It is too Divine a ſtate for Man to aſpire to.

*Thirdly*, It is ſo little that the Attainment is not worth our while.

*Fourthly*, We had beſt follow Nature and Cuſtom as the Guides to Happineſs without Study.

*Fifthly*, There is that Variety in Men, and conſequently in their Happineſs, that it ſeems incapable of any Conſtant and General Rules.

*Sixthly*, The Diverſity of Opinions concerning Happineſs.

*The Importance of this Enquiry.*

THe Deſire of Happineſs is the firſt, moſt Powerful, and moſt Univerſal Principle of humane Actions; This moves the Prince and Peaſant, the Learned and the Idiot: Revelation and Reaſon take this for granted, all Laws both Divine, and Humane, propoſing our Happineſs as the ſole and ſufficient Motive to our Obedience.

But all this while, thô all ſorts of Religion and Government do unanimouſly conſent in the Propoſal of this one general end; yet ſo great is the

the Diverſity (I may ſay Contrariety) in the Methods in which they purſue it, that it ſeems to imply the Diſcovery of Happineſs a matter of no leſs Uncertainty than Importance; there being neceſſarily as great a Variety in the Opinions of Men about it, as in their Lives and Actions, or in the forms of Religion and Government in the World; ſince all theſe ſeem, according to the different Judgments of Men, ſo many different Paths which lead to it.

Till therefore I have fix't the Notion of Happineſs, and found out what it conſiſts in, 'tis impoſſible I ſhould live rationally: how ſhall I ſteer the Courſe of my Life aright, when I know not what Port I would make? how ſhall my Actions tend to any Wiſe or Noble purpoſes when I have no mark prefix't 'em? till then I muſt live *extempore* and act at Random, I muſt abandon my ſelf to Wind and Tide, to Time and Chance.

(*Hoſpes.* Horat.
*Quo me cunq; rapit tempeſtas deferor*

*Toſt by a Storm for my Retreat I take,*
*Whatever Shore th' unguided Bark can make.*

In a word, till I have fixt this Notion, and know what to aim at, Buſineſs will be but a Mechanic Drudging out of life, and Study but a vain amuſement of my Mind: whereas when all the Inclinations of Life and Soul ſhall have one Uniform bent and tendency, when every deſire of the Soul, and every action of Life ſhall be a ſtep advancing in a direct line towards Happineſs, when the vigour and activity of my Mind ſhall not be ſuſpended and fruſtrated by incertainties and fluctuation, nor deluded and loſt in wandring Errors and Deviations, but ſhall ever carry me ſtraight forwards towards my Journey's End: then certainly all my Labours will thrive and proſper, and my progreſs will be great, thô my Motion ſhould be but feeble and ſlow: Thus Plants whoſe native vigour mounts ſtraight upwards, thô their bulk be leſs, yet their height and beauty is greater than their's whoſe Luxuriant

Luxuriant nouriſhment waſts it ſelf in gouty Knots, and diſtorted Branches.

Having conſider'd this I reſolv'd, that I could not ſpend my time more manly, and Philoſophically than in an Enquiry, what the Happineſs of Man is, and how attainable: Every Advance towards this is an acceſſion to my Life and Being; and all Travail which doth not lead me on towards this End is but ſo much of Life miſpent and loſt; what a ſillyneſs were it to load my Memory with terms and words, with numerous Inſtances of Matters of Fact, to marſhal up in Order, Lines, and Figures, to talk of unknown Seas and diſtant Shores, to tumble over each Page in Nature's Syſteme? What trifling Cunning to skill the gainful Myſteries of Trade? what ſolemn and laborious foppery to penetrate into all the Subtilties of Government and Arts of Converſation? If after all I have no Receipt for a troubled Mind, no Cure for diſtempered Paſſions, if I have no Principle to ſupport my Mind under a ſinking Fortune, or govern it in

a riſing one, if I have nothing to arm me againſt my Fears, or to diſperſe my Griefs; wou'd any one think I had ſpent my time well, or ſtock't my ſelf with uſeful Knowledge?

But to find out what would make me Happier, to find out what would free my Mind from the ſlavery of uneaſie Paſſions, what would make it ſerene, ſteady, great and manly in all the Accidents of Life; this every Man ſees at the firſt bluſh to be a wiſe, generous and ſerviceable Employment of my Reaſon. This,

*Æquè pauperibus prodeſt, locupletibus æquè,*
*Æquè neglectum pueris ſenibuſq; nocebit.*

*This Learning rich and poor alike do need,*
*And its Neglect do's certain Ruin breed,*
*To old and young alike——*

This occaſion'd St. *Auſtin*'s Ingenious Reflexion on the Poly-theiſm of the *Romans*; when he conſidered that they worſhipped *Felicitas* (by which they

they mean't that Deity that could confer Happineſs upon men) he could not but wonder, why this was not the moſt Ancient of all their God's; or why, when this Deity was found out, they did not preſently diſcard the other idle multitude of ſuperfluous and unneceſſary Gods; ſince this alone was ſufficient to ſupply all the Neceſſities, and gratifie all the deſires and appetites of Mankind.

*The Neceſſity of this Enquiry for the Redreſs of Humane Miſery.*

But thô Happineſs ſhould be a project too great, too ambitious for a poor ſilly Mortal; yet ſure the Redreſs of thoſe Evil which oppreſs our State and Nature is ſuch an humble and modeſt Deſign as may well become the meanneſs of Man; and therefore if I could not excuſe the Confidence or Preſumption of this Enquiry by pleading the innate Deſire of Happineſs; yet ſure I might by urging the multitude of thoſe Evils which infeſt Humane Life, which 'tis not only irrational but impoſſible ſo far to yield and ſubmit to, as not to ſtruggle to free our ſelves from 'em, or endeavour to lighten their afflicting weight, or

ſtudy to prevent 'em: This I confeſs was the firſt, and none of the leaſt prevalent Arguments that engag'd me; I love my ſelf, and would be, if not Happy, at leaſt not miſerable, and I am neither inſenſible nor fearleſs; I know the common Portion of Man, and I cannot ſo far flatter my ſelf as not to apprehend approaching Evils, nor am I naturally ſo hard and tough as not to ſhrink and gall under the weight of them, and I ſuppoſe moſt Men are of the ſame Nature with me, and as liable as I am to all the Evils of Time and Chance; and conſequently this one Conſideration of Humane Miſery ought to work very powerfully in them, and effectually oblige 'em to this Study.

In this place I took a Diſtinct View, and made an Exact Survey of every particular Calamity which befalls Man, reducing 'em all under their ſeveral heads; I allow'd my ſelf the Melancholy pleaſure of viewing the mournful Pomp, whil'ſt I ſaw their numerous Legions marching under their diſtinct Banners, arm'd with great variety of fatal

fatal, dreadful weapons: but beſides that this would have made too tedious an Interruption in the thread of my Diſcourſe: I will deal freely with the World, I had in private drawn as exact and lively a Portraicture of Humane Miſery, as I could, I had left no ſhade, no feature wanting as I thought: but when I had finiſhed it, obſerving it exactly from head to foot, I found my own Sins and Follies made up the ugglieſt and moſt frightful Parts of it: and therefore I thought it not freedom but impudence to expoſe to open view all the Deformities of the Soul, when natural Modeſty guides the *Painter*'s hand to draw a covering over the uncomley Parts of the Body.

However ſuch a general Survey of Humane Miſery as may ſerve to awaken our Concern, and quicken and inflame our Induſtry, will not be improper or unneceſſary in this place: A rude Draught or naked Scheme of the general heads of thoſe Evils, to which the Life of Man is expos'd, will preſent us with a very formidable hoſt of Plagues and Miſchiefs. The Evils that harraſs

harraſs Mankind are either *Natural*, which grow out of our ſelves like Ruſt, and Moths, and Worms, out of thoſe very Bodies which they afterwards deſtroy; or elſe they are *accidental*, ſuch as the various Chances and Revolutions of the World bring upon us: *Natural* Evils either have their Reſidence in the *Soul* or in the *Body*; the *Body* is liable to maiming, to loſs of Senſes, to Decay and Languiſhings, to numerous Diſeaſes, and to Death. As to the *Soul*, in the *Underſtanding*, there is Ignorance, Errour, Superſtition, Uncertainty, Suſpicion, &c. In the *Will* Obſtinacy, Precipitancy, Levity, Inconſtancy, Impotence, Irreſolution, Fluctuation, Diſtraction. In the *inferiour* and *ſenſitive* Part of the Soul of Man a thouſand reſtleſs Paſſions marching under the Conduct of blind and raſh Love and Hate. *Accidental* Evils contain all that vaſt number which may befall thoſe things without us, which we to our great hurt falſly call ours; ſuch are Loſs or Diminution of Reputation, Power, Eſtate, Friends, Relations, &c. and

and what is worſe than this, numerous are the Evils which we ſuffer not only in thoſe things which we call our's, but alſo in thoſe we our ſelves confeſs not to be our's; ſuch are reſtleſs Deſire, wakeful and laborious Purſuit, tame digeſtion of the Neglect, Coldneſs, Inſolence and Inſincerity of thoſe we depend upon and addreſs to; Contemptuous Repulſes, Vexatious diſappointments, &c. After all this, all theſe Evils are to be reckon'd double, for we are liable to 'em not only in our ſelves, but in our Friends and our Relations; and then we muſt double 'em almoſt all again, for we ſuffer 'em in Reality or in Fancy and Imagination, we ſuffer 'em when preſent and when future too: for as if the Evil of the Day were not ſufficient for it, we ſearch the dark and unknown Regions of future time, that we may find out what may make us miſerable; and we frequently torture our ſelves with Idle not Prophetic fears: we often ſuffer the want, the pain, &c. which we ſhall never feel; and our own ſuſpicious, deſpondent, melancholy Minds do

do raiſe thoſe hideous Apparitions which ſcare and frighten us. Theſe are a few of the general Heads of Humane Miſery, thoſe Fountains that ever flow with Litter Waters; this is a brief account of the Nature and State of Man. *Ariſtotle*'s Definition of him, that he is a Rational Creature, is flat and heavy in Compariſon to that of *Apuleius* the witty thô diſſolute *Platonic*, *Homines Ratione plaudentes, oratione pollentes, immortalibus animis, moribundis membris, levibus & anxiis mentibus, brutis & obnoxiis corporibus, diſſimilibus moribus, ſimilibus erroribus, pervicaci audaciâ, pertinaci ſpe, caſſo labore, fortunâ caducâ, volucri tempore, tardâ ſapientiâ, citâ morte, quærulâ vitâ terras incolunt*, i. e. Men the Inhabitants of Earth are endow'd with Speech, and vaunt of Reaſon, immortal are their Souls, mortal their Limbs, inconſtant and anxious are their Minds, bruitiſh and obnoxious are their Bodies; unlike are they in their Manners, like in their Errors, ſturdy is their Confidence and obſtinate their Hope, fruitleſs their Toil, uncertain

*Apul. de Deo Socratis.*

tain their Fortune, ſwift their Years, and ſlow their Wiſdom, ſpeedy their Death and their Life full of Plaints.

Thus miſerable is our State, and ſhall we now ſit down and only Childiſhly bewail our ſelves? Shall we ſink under the weight of theſe Evils, by adding to 'em one heavier than 'em all, *Deſpair*? Shall we think the thread of Evils is ſo cloſely and fatally wove into one Piece with the thread of Life, that no Wiſdom, no Induſtry can prevent 'em? that no Philoſophy (how Divine ſoever) can divide or ſeparate the one from the other? and conſequently never think of any other than that one Univerſal Remedy of *Virgil*, *Patience*.

----*Fortuna omnis ſuperanda ferendo eſt*,

Ah wretched Nature! ah too helpleſs State!
If nought but ſuffering can o'recome our Fate!

No, no, let others do what they will, I'le never thus abandon my ſelf, I will not tamely and daſtardly renounce my hopes

hopes of Happineſs, I'le ſtudy and contend for it whilſt I have a being, what-e're Calamities aſſault me, they ſhall find me ready arm'd from head to foot, nor ſhall they ever gain o're me an eaſie Victory; Death it ſelf, when e're it comes, ſhall find me ſtrugling to the laſt for life, Eternal Life and Happineſs: nor can I entertain ſo unworthy a thought of the moſt perfect Being, but that he loves this Reſolution where-e're he meets it, and will be moſt ready to aſſiſt his Creatures in ſo juſt and rational an Endeavour.

But as the *Iſraelites* when they march't in Arms to take Poſſeſſion of the Promiſed Land, were told of Sons of *Anak*, Gigantic Enemies, and Cities walled and fenced up to Heaven; ſo ſhall I or any man who goes about to poſſeſs himſelf of ſo great a Bleſſing as Happineſs, be diſcourag'd by worldly and ſenſual Men with the toil we are to undergo, with the Difficulties we are to encounter, and generally with repreſentations of the folly and raſhneſs of the Attempt: Theſe muſt indeed be contemn'd and ſlighted, but

it

it muſt be upon Rational grounds, and therefore I muſt conſider their weight and ſtrength before I proceed.

## SECT. II.

### *Of the Objections form'd againſt this Enquiry.*

THE Objection which aſſaults this Enquiry with the Rudeſt Violence is this, That Happineſs is not a thing attainable, and therefore the ſtudy of it and endeavour after it, is a vain thing: This Objection deſerves to be thorowly examin'd as that which will otherwiſe Subvert the very Foundation of this Work; and therefore I'le reſerve the Conſideration of it to an entire Chapter, *v. Ch.* 2. *Obj.* 1.

There are other Objections which are framed partly from the Nature of Happineſs, partly from the Nature of Man, which thô, as all Errours, they Contradict one another; yet do they all unite their forces to oppoſe the Truth, and to deter Men from the Nobleſt and moſt Rational Study and Travail, That of Happineſs.

Various

*Obj.* 2. Various is the working of humane Fancy, they that will pretend to be Acute and Wiſe above the vulgar part of Mankind (for ſuch are always apt to deſpiſe Speculation and Learning) look upon Happineſs as too Divine and Glorious a State for ſo mean a Creature as Man to affect; it was not only vain but ſinful Ambition of our firſt Parents to aſpire to the likeneſs of God, *Ye ſhall be as Gods*; and what can be more truly the Prerogative and peculiar poſſeſſion of God than Happineſs? or what can make us more like God? to affect this therefore were the folly of thoſe Earth-Born Creatures in the Poet which ſacrilegiouſly invaded Heaven; let us be content with the Portion of Man, and reſt ſatisfy'd with thoſe eaſie and obvious Pleaſures which beſt ſuit this imperfect Nature and imperfect State: I know not how well ſome may pleaſe themſelves with this ſort of Talk; but this is plain to me, theſe

Gen. 3.

*Omnis enim per ſe Divûm natura neceſſe eſt,*
*Immortali ævo ſummâ cum pace fruatur,*
——— *Privata dolore omni, privata periclis*
*Ipſa ſuis pollens opibus.* Lucret.

theſe Men are contradictious to themſelves and their Philoſophy to all true Reaſon; for notwithſtanding this affected debaſing of humane Nature, the tranſports of theſe Voluptuaries are as bold and ambitious as thoſe of the haughtieſt *Stoic*, and 'tis no ſtrange thing to hear an *Epicurean* boaſt of a Parity or Equality with his *Jupiter* in the point of Happineſs or Pleaſure. But to anſwer the Objection in a word, be the Nature of Mankind what it will, I do readily confeſs, that it were, if not a ſinful, yet a vain ambition for Man to affect any other Happineſs than what was ſuitable to his Nature; for it were to purſue what he were not capable of, it were like the folly of *Semele* in the Poet when ſhe deſir'd that ſhe might be entertain'd by *Jupiter*, not only with the Paſſion of a Lover, but the Glory and Majeſty of a God, and ſo being fatally ſucceſsful in her wiſh, ſhe periſhed in the Embraces ſhe had ſo proudly begg'd; this therefore we readily grant, Happineſs is a ſtate of Pleaſure, and Pleaſure is the Reſult of the proportion and

agreeableneſs of the Object to the capacity or appetite; ſo that he that aſpires to a ſtate of Happineſs that infinitely exceeds his nature, fooliſhly doats on Contradictions, and affects a Happineſs devoid of Pleaſure: or which is all one, covets a Pleaſure which he cannot enjoy: This being yielded to on the one hand, that we ought to purſue no other ſtate of Happineſs than what ſuits and fits our Capacities; they ought as readily to yield on the other hand if they will ſuppoſe God the Creator of Man, and concern'd in his Actions (as theſe ſeem to do) that he does not only allow of, but delight in all the Endeavours of Man after ſuch a ſtate: thoſe Faculties and Capacities he endows us with being the faireſt Declarations of his Will what he deſigns us for: the ſole Difficulty therefore that remains will be this, what the Nature of Man is? what the Dignity and Excellency of the Rational Soul? which ſhall be diſcuſſed in its place.

There

There are others of that ſluggiſh and bruitiſh temper, that being unable to raiſe their Conception above Sence, or diſcover any Charm in a Rational and Philoſophical pleaſure, they ſeem to deſpiſe that Happineſs, the Wiſe and Religious part of Mankind profeſs to ſeek after, and to think all the Pleaſure Man can enjoy, ſo little, that 'tis ſcarce worth the while to take much pains for it: It is true I am but Man, that is, a little Atom in the vaſt bulk of matter, and my life is but a ſhort moment in an endleſs ſtream of time: but then I feel a ſtrange kind of Comprehenſiveneſs in my Soul, it ſtretcheth forth it ſelf to times paſt and to come, it enjoys things that are not ſeen by Faith and Hope, and ſometimes things that are not at all by Memory and Fancy; and thô my life be but a moment, Satisfaction and Pleaſure hath its degrees; and therefore if I can poſſeſs it in its height and perfection, I ſhall live much thô not long, I ſhall enjoy Eternity in a moment, the World in a little Globe: nor is this mere fancy and Romance, *Obj.* 3.

for when I read St. *Auſtin* ſo far inflamed with the Love of true Philoſophy by *Cicero*'s Book *ad Hortenſium*, that he preſently abandons all the luſcious Pleaſures of his Pagan Converſation for the ſake of thoſe which he ſhould afterwards find in a Philoſophical life; when I find *Cicero* in ſurely a holy raviſhment of Soul, preferring *one Day ſpent according to the Precepts of Vertue before a ſinful Immortality*; and the *Pſalmiſt* almoſt in the ſame words as well as the ſame paſſion, *One day in thy Courts is better than a thouſand*; I cannot chooſe but think there are irreſiſtible Charms and Beauties in Vertue, and Pleaſures in true Philoſophy as raviſhing as they are pure and ſacred and who then can reſtrain himſelf from the glowing deſires of, and reſolute Endeavours after a ſhare in them? when I have read *Socrates* dying with a generous Charity, and ſerene Hopes, and with an undiſturb'd Mind, eaſily parting with all here below; when I have read of *Simeon* waiting for, and expecting Death, as weary Labourers do the Evening Shades, or

Pſal. 84.

Hire-

Hirelings the Reward of their work; when I read St. *Paul* with humble Impatience expreſſing his devout deſire of Death and Diſſolution; when I have ſeen ſome (as ſome I have ſeen) ſetting in Calm, and Majeſty, and Triumph, as if they had attended Death, as the old *Romans* once did the barbarous *Gaules* in their Chairs and Robes; when I have ſeen men dye, not only with Content, but almoſt in Extaſie, and the Soul breath'd forth not in a Groan, but an Ejaculation, I muſt needs ſay I could not chooſe but wiſh with *Balaam, that I might dye the Death of the Righteous, and that my latter end might be like his.* Numb. 23. Theſe are degrees of Happineſs which I ſhould judge it reaſonable to purchaſe at any Rate, whatever there be hereafter; a ſmooth, contented, delightful life, ſuch as would not only bear but invite Reflexions on it, a chearful, lightſome Death, able to make the living in love with it.

But after all, whether this preſent life be all my Portion, whether I dye all of me together with my Body, or

whether this life be only the time of our probation and preparation for another, and Death be nothing but the rough paſſage from one ſhore to another, or the Horizon that parts the Hemiſphere of Darkneſs from that of Light, is a queſtion I will not now determine: 'tis ſufficient to propoſe it here as a doubt whereof one ſide or other muſt be true. If therefore this life be in Order to Eternity, it nearly imports me to conſider my preſent Relation to a future ſtate; if it be not, then this life, call it what you pleaſe, a Span, a Dream, or a Bubble, yet is it my *All*, and I muſt make the moſt of it: But,

*Obj.* 4. Are not *Nature* and *Cuſtom* the beſt guides to Happineſs? what needs there ſo much poring to find out that which mere inſtinct leads us to? we do not ſee that the moſt learned Clerks are always the moſt Happy men; let ſuch demonſtrate the truth of their Philoſophy by their own ſucceſs: And thus they magnifie Nature, not out of any honour they deſign to do it or the Author

Author of it, but that they may with the greater Security contemn the one, and deprave the other by ſluggiſh Luxury and unbridled Luſt. I am not eaſily tempted to a Contempt of Nature or of Cuſtoms, for by the one I ſhould ſeem injurious to God, who is the Author of Nature; and by th'other I ſhould ſeem injurious to Mankind, whoſe concurrent Senſe and conſtant Practice creates a Cuſtom. Therefore as to the former part of the Objection, were it but once truly determin'd what were to be underſtood by *Nature*, this Objection would vaniſh: I think our Souls within us may be juſtly ſuppos'd to conſtitute a part of our Nature as well as our Bodies; and therefore I cannot be content that the Body, much leſs vicious habits (commonly call'd indeed a ſecond Nature) ſhould uſurp the Name and Authority of Nature; nor conſequently can I be c ntent to allow of the mere ſenſual Appetites of the Body, much leſs the Dictates of vicious habits for the Laws of Nature: The Body indeed is an Eſſential part of our Nature, but then it muſt be remem-

bred 'tis not the governing part; and therefore it's Inſtinct cannot Arrogate to it ſelf the Authority of a Law. It remains therefore that thô the Rational Soul within us be but a part of our Nature, yet being the better part, the *Ruling* part, its Dictates muſt have the force of *Laws*; ſo that the Law of Nature will be nothing elſe but the Commands of right Reaſon: I ſhall be moſt ready to grant, that we ought to follow the Conduct of our Nature, taking it in this ſenſe, *Beatè vivit qui ſecundum eam partem animi vivit quam dominari in homine fas eſt*, he indeed lives Happily who follows the Conduct of that part to which belongs the undoubted Right of Soveraignty and Dominion in man. As to the latter part of this Objection; By *Cuſtoms* is commonly meant thoſe Principles and Practices which are generally receiv'd and faſhionable in the place we live; I have a juſt Veneration for whatever is the ſenſe of Mankind, but I think their ſuffrage is not to be taken by number, but by weight: nor are we to follow the Opinion or Example of

*Aug. contra Academicos.*

of the moſt, but of the beſt, nor indeed is it poſſible to underſtand what is the ſenſe of Mankind in this point; for we have Cuſtom againſt Cuſtom, Nation againſt Nation, and Religion againſt Religion.

It ought farther to be conſider'd, That Principles taken upon truſt have ſeldom an equal influence upon us, with thoſe which we take up upon ſtrict Examination and mature Deliberation: that men will eaſily be tempted to deſert thoſe for which they have no better Authority than the vote of a Multitude: Nor can any thing tend more to the Diſparagement of any perſuaſion than this, that 'tis not the Reſult of our Judgment but our Fortune; or to the Diſhonour of any Religion than this, that 'tis Magiſterially obtruded by the Authority of Laws and terrour of Force, and will not ſubmit it ſelf to the tryal of ſober Philoſophy: and ſo I take it to be a Credit to the Chriſtian Religion, that it did not force aſſent, but gain it by irreſiſtible Arguments; that tis ſo far from ſhunning the tryal of Impartial Philoſophy, that it

it did always invite men to a ſober Examination of its Evidence: and
1 Pet. 3. commanded its Diſciples, *be ready to give an anſwer to every man that asketh you a Reaſon of the hope that is in you.* 'Tis true indeed as the Caſe now ſtands, Religion may, nay muſt be recommended by Authority of Law and Cuſtom, and ingratiated by particular Practice of it; but afterwards muſt grow up and be confirm'd by Reaſon, like a tender Plant that is firſt fixt by the help of another's hands, but afterwards it ſtands firmeſt upon its own Roots: and this Method our Saviour himſelf did ſometimes make uſe of, when either the ſtupidity of Nature or Prejudice of Education rendred thoſe to whom he addreſſed his Doctrine uncapable of entring into a thorow Examination of it; *Then if any man will do my will, he ſhall know of the Doctrine whether it be of God.*

Laſtly, That to truſt to others who themſelves with like Raſhneſs and Credulity do in the ſame manner truſt to others in the matter of the higheſt moment of my life, ſeems to me inconſiſtent

ſiſtent with common Prudence, with the very Conſtitution of a rational Nature: for what uſe can be as much as fancied of Reaſon, if I ſlight its ſervice in ſo important an affair as this?

It is true, Temper Fortune and Education have *de facto* ſo great a ſhare in the Happineſs or Miſery of ſome kind of men eſpecially, that I muſt not yet diſmiſs this Objection till I have taken a little notice of ſuch for whoſe defence and ſervice it was at firſt found out; Theſe are,

Firſt, The ſtupid and bruitiſh part of Mankind, theſe ſeem to have met with Happineſs whilſt they ſeek it not: their Fancy's flat, their Proſpect ſhort, and their Deſires few and eaſie, and conſequently if their Pleaſures be not rais'd, neither are their troubles deep; Time and Chance happen to 'em, and they bear the one, and wear out the other without any very melancholy or tender Reſentments: Stupidity in them outdoes all the habits of Philoſophy in others, and want of ſence makes them laugh more loudly, live more ſecurely, and dye more unconcern'dly than the

the acuteſt and thoughtfulleſt of Men can.

Were the Incapacity of theſe Men great enough to juſtifie their Contempt of Reaſon and Religion, I ſhould almoſt be tempted to call them Happy: but at the ſame moment I ſhould deſpiſe their Happineſs, *Non ideo tamen quiſquam felicia dixerit, quibus non eſt felicitatis Intellectus.* I cannot call thoſe Happy, whate're their Enjoyments be, whoſe Souls are too ſluggiſh and drouſie to underſtand or reflect upon their Happineſs: or if I muſt call this Happineſs, 'tis the Happineſs of a Beaſt not of a Man: with me to live is ſomewhat greater than to feed and Reſt, and to be Happy muſt be much more than to live. The Extream to theſe are,

*Senec. de Vit. Beatâ.*

Secondly, The Gay, the Gaudy, the Modiſh, the unthinking part of Mankind; theſe in their own Opinion, and truly in the Opinion of the World (moſt men being either Flatterers or Enviers of their good luck) may pretend to Happineſs: and if their pretence be well founded, their way to Happi-

Happineſs is a more ready, plain, and compendious one than any that ever was or ever will be diſcover'd.

But alaſs ſhortneſs of ſight cannot paſs with me for Wit, nor an unthinking Confidence for Wiſdom: I have ſeen moſt of thoſe Dreams the World can preſent the gayeſt fancy with, and upon the utmoſt of my trial, I have perhaps found ſomething that could divert, nothing that could ſatisfie a Rational Soul: I will not here Examine what is the Imployment, what the Pleaſure proper to a Rational Being: Nor will I now go about to ſhew, that that Mind can enjoy no ſober or laſting Peace, much leſs Pleaſure, which is engag'd in ſuch a Method of life as it cannot give a good account of, or rationally juſtifie to it ſelf; both which Conſiderations would be plain Refutations of this gay Objection: 'tis enough in this place to ſay that this ſort of life is repugnant to thoſe Principles which Religion reveals, which Reaſon ſeems readily to embrace, and which are back't by all the Authority which the unanimous Approbation of the wiſeſt and

and beſt part of Mankind can give 'em. It behoves us therefore not to abandon our ſelves to this kind of life, till we have narrowly diſcus't and try'd theſe Principles; for if they ſhould prove true, then will this ſenſual careleſs life betray us to a miſerable Eternity: and thô they ſhould be falſe, yet till we are upon Rational Grounds convinc'd that they are ſo, we have little Reaſon to commit our Happineſs to ſo great a hazard, where the Odds are very great againſt us that we are in the wrong.

It remains notwithſtanding all theſe Objections that it behoves every man to purſue his Happineſs by a Rational Enquiry after it, neither undervaluing Humane Nature or its Happineſs, nor giving up himſelf to the guidance of the bruitiſh and blind part of him, but ſeriouſly and thorowly to Examine whatever End be propos'd to him as his Happineſs, or whatever Method be propos'd to him as the way to it; but when we have blown off theſe not formidable Objections againſt this Enquiry, but looſe and wanton Excuſes

of

of the neglect of it; there are others yet that ſeem by a fairer ſhew of Reaſon to deter us from it by the Difficulty and unſucceſsfulneſs of the Attempt.

Happineſs (ſay they) is like *Proteus* in the Poet, it puts on ſo many different Forms and Shapes, that it ſeems impoſſible to circumſcribe it within general Rules, or to repreſent it under any one fixt, definite and ſingle Notion or Idea; and it deſerves well to be examin'd, what weight or Truth there is in the Vulgar Notion of Happineſs, That for a man to be Happy is nothing elſe but to live according to his Fancy, and it ſeems no leſs abſurd to invite every man to the ſame Heaven, or gratifie every humour by the ſame kind of Happineſs, than to entertain all Appetites with one and the ſame Diſh. But as in that great variety of Complexion, Feature, Shape and Motion, and in that great diverſity of Capacities and Endowments which we behold in men, there is yet one Common Nature wherein they all agree, whereby *Obj.* 5.

whereby they are conſtituted Creatures of the ſame Species: juſt ſuch accidental Varieties may the Happineſs of man be capable of, and yet the Life and Being, the Soul and Subſtance of Happineſs may be one and the ſame, and conſequently may be comprehended under general Rules. And if this anſwer were not ſufficient, it would not be abſurd to ſay, that Happineſs like Beauty may put on various Dreſſes, and yet be ſtill charming and delightful in each, or that this Bread like that of Heaven (for ſo the Rabbins tell us of Manna) has that in it which gratifies every Palate; there are Soveraign and unallay'd Bleſſings, ſuch as Life, and Perfection, and Indolence, &c. which take with every appetite, and are univerſally welcom'd to all the Sons of men. Or I may truly ſay, That Happineſs muſt not only be prepared and fitted for Man, but Man for his Happineſs; he muſt become a Rational Creature e're he can enjoy a Rational Pleaſure: 'tis from this want of Preparation that diverſity of Opinions concerning Happi-

neſs

neſs ſprings, which is ſo univerſal a Diſcouragement. For,

It cannot laſtly be deny'd but that the Opinions of Men concerning Happineſs have been and are extreamly Various: All the Different Sects of Philoſophy and Religion being ſo many differing Paths which the differing Apprehenſions of the Minds of Men have mark't out to Happineſs. I have no undervaluing thoughts of the Abilities of Mankind, or overweening Opinion of my own, I cannot think my ſelf clearer ſighted, nor can I promiſe that I ſhall be more fortunate or more induſtrious in my ſearch than others; this is my Comfort, that my miſcarrying in this Attempt is more honorable than Succeſs in a trifling and impertinent one---- *Obj.* 6.

——*Magnis tamen excidit auſis.*

Nor can I think that uncertainty which this Diverſity of Opinions ſeems to imply, ſufficient to deter any wiſe man's Enquiry; no Sick man in his

Wits will renounce the Desires or Hopes of a Cure, because Physicians differ in their Opinions about the Method of it: the study of Philosophy has never been utterly forsaken, thô that of one age baffle and o'rethrow that of another, and yet even this again stands rather upon the weakness and obscurity of the former, than its own Strength or Evidence. The *Academics* do not seem to have entertain'd so gross an absurdity as some have fancy'd, when they taught that Wisdom consisted in the search of Truth, even at the same time when they believ'd that it could not be fully found out: for where Certainty cannot be had, it is not unreasonable to follow the fairest probabilities. And if this were rationally practised in any Study, certainly much more in that of Happiness; since the Necessity of this Study above any other doth more indispensibly oblige us to it; for all Labour and Learning that promotes not the great End of Happiness is to no purpose, since we are ne're the better for't; for to be the better, and to be the happier for't is all one.

But

But there is no Reaſon why we ſhould take up with theſe cold and lifeleſs Anſwers which will ſatisfie none, but thoſe who are extreamly well inclin'd: we may now boldly ſay, the Difficulties that former Ages met with, are of no force now to deter us, we can now free our ſelves from the diſtracting Terrours of an Inviſible Power without baniſhing him out of that World which himſelf creat d, we can now prove a Judgment to come without the Aſſiſtance of Poetic Dreams; and the Exiſtence of Soul after Death, without their Præexiſtence before our Birth: To be ſhort, we have now Revelation for our Rule, and every good Man a Divine Spirit for his guide; nay, every man (if he be ſincere) in ſuch Enquiries as theſe. *If any of you lack Wiſdom, let him ask of God who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not; and it ſhall be given him.* So that now, we may very rationally conclude, that fatal Ignorance or fatal Errour in this Point muſt be imputed either to a lazy and ſottiſh Contempt of that Knowledge we are moſt nearly James 1.

concern'd in, and the means conducing to it, or to an obſtinate Reſiſtance of that Conviction which God endeavours to beget in us by his Word and his Spirit, or at leaſt to the want of that juſt Conſideration we ought to allow to reveal'd Truths, or of that Neceſſary preparation which fits us for Divine Aſſiſtance, and enables us to underſtand the Divine Will; and for this Reaſon the Diſſentions and ſharp Contentions of Chriſtians ought to be no prejudice to the Authority or Perſpicuity of Revelation, or to the Aſſertion of the Spirit's Conduct and Aſſiſtance: for beſides that Unity of Faith is an Unity of Fundamentals not of Fancies, it muſt be confeſſed that our Sects and Diviſions have their Riſe and Propagation from theſe and ſuch like Cauſes; nothing being more common than that men's Tempers and Complexions, and Educations, and Intereſts and Paſſions ſhou'd give a Byaſs to their Judgments, and a Tincture to their Teners and Opinions: it is eaſie to ſee that the Errors of ſome are the Dreams of a drouzy Careleſsneſs; of

others,

others, the wandrings of a wanton Confidence; of others, the crooked windings of Deſigning Intereſt, and ſo on; for it may with much truth be affirm'd, that all Erroneous Philoſophy in matters Neceſſary and Fundamental, is the Reſult of ſome unworthy Luſt and Paſſion; But all theſe Matters, namely the uſe of Revelation and God's Spirit, the Vanity of all Objections form'd againſt Religion from Diſſentions about it, the Difficulties the Heathens were to encounter in their Enquiries after Happineſs, &c. ſhall be more fully treated of in their proper places.

Thus I think I have ſufficiently evinc'd the Importance and Neceſſity of an Enquiry after Happineſs, ſince 'tis impoſſible to ſteer the Courſe of Life aright without a clear Knowledge of that which ought to be the End, the Centre of all our Deſires and Endeavours, that is, Happineſs: without this 'tis not only impoſſible to be happy, but what ought ſeriouſly to be weighed, impoſſible not to be miſerable: nor let us ever ſo far diſparage and under-

value Humane Nature or diſhonour the Author of it, as ever once to fancy, that Happineſs is too great for us, or we too little for it; or that God ſhould diſallow as a Sacrilegious Ambition the moſt rational attempts of a rational Creature, I mean thoſe of becoming Happy: ſince we ſeek no other Happineſs than what the Make and Frame of Nature, and conſequently the God of Nature app ars plainly to capacitate us for, and deſign us to; the greatneſs of which, nothing can ſo well expreſs as the Tranſports and Raptures of Happy Men.

But let us not think this Happineſs ſo eaſie a purchaſe that it will run into the lap of the ſluggiſh *Body*, or proſtitute it ſelf to the Embraces of ſenſeleſs bruitiſh Luſts. No, no, nothing but Induſtrious Reaſon, pure and vigorous Philoſophy can e're attain it; The Sluggard or the Wanton, the Fool and Vain may have ſome Fits of Eaſe and Mirth, only the Rational, only the Philoſopher can poſſeſs true and laſting Happineſs: Nor let the endleſs Quarrels, the numerous Contentions of vain

and

and proud Pretenders diſcourage us from following the Conduct of Reaſon and Revelation, theſe are the Contentions of Luſt, not Philoſophy; Truth and Happineſs, (as ſome have lately fancy'd of Love) inhabit a Palace into which none can enter, but humble, ſincere, and conſtant Lovers.

## CHAP. II.

### *Of the Poſſibility of attaining Happineſs.*

Obj. *Few or none ever actually Happy, Anſwer'd.* §. *Religion denies not the Poſſibility of preſent Happineſs. The Doctrine of the Croſs no Obſtruction to this life's Happineſs. Mortification recommended by the Light of Nature, as ſubſervient to our preſent Happineſs. The Happineſs of this life granted Imperfect.* §. *The Poſſibility,* &c. *prov'd; becauſe ſome are Happier than others; becauſe there is Good and Evil in the World. Evils not more than Goods in the World. The Efficacy of Evil not greater than that of Good. Man's Good or Evil depends upon himſelf.* §. *Objections anſwer'd. God not delighted in Humane Miſery. Fortune cannot prevent our Happineſs. Every Man Architect of his own Fortune. Fortune not Neceſſary to Happineſs.*

*The*

*The Objection from Fate anſwer'd. Several Notions of Fate. No inſuperable Neceſſity in Humane Affairs or Actions, at leaſt no Fate overruling the Mind of Man. No Incapacity of Happineſs from Nature. Againſt Moral Incapacity. Againſt penal Incapacity. Inſtances of Men actually Happy in this Life. The Poſition of the Poſſibility of Happineſs conſonant to the Senſe of Mankind. The Concluſion.*

IT is apparent from the former Chapter, that the purſuit and ſearch after Happineſs is a Rational Undertaking, an Imployment becoming the Nature and State of Man: there remains only one Objection, which if true, were ſufficient to diſcourage the Endeavours, and chill the heat of the moſt Vertuous and Reſolv'd Ambition. Which is this,

'Tis true, Happineſs may be found in Speculation, but rarely if ever in poſſeſſion and fruition: The Number of the Fortunate and Happy is extreamly ſmall; and moſt Men, if not all, when *Obj. Few or none ever actually Happy in this life.*

when they have worn life to its laſt Period, may give that account of it which the Aged (and as others no doubt thought Happy Patriarch) did
Gen. 47. of his to *Pharaoh*, *Few and Evil have the Days of the Years of my life been.* But it moves me not ſo much to hear this from the mouth of a Shepherd who from his Youth led a laborious and unſetled life: But when I read the mournful Poems of *Job*, the Diſcontents and Melancholy of *Solomon*, Men no leſs Eminent for Wiſdom and Philoſophy than for their Worldly Glory and Proſperity; when I read 'em bewailing the Lot of Mankind, unable to reflect upon it without a mixture of Indignation, Contempt and Womaniſh Sorrow, I cannot but acknowledge that I am ſhrewdly tempted to deſpair of Happineſs as of ſomething too great and Divine to make its abode upon Earth, and to look upon all the fine Diſcourſes that Men make of it only as ſo many flights of a bold fancy. Happineſs! what is it? or where is it? in what diſtant Coaſts or unknown Regions do's it dwell? who and where are

are the Fortunate? who and where are the Darlings of Heaven to whoſe Lot it happens? Shall we like *Bajazet* in a melancholy Humour think Poor, Silly, Lazy Peaſants Happy? *O happy Shepherd who had'ſt neither* Sebaſtia *nor* Orthobales *to loſe:* as if ſecure Beggary and ſlothful want were Happineſs; happy thus might I call the Man born Blind, he has no Eyes to loſe. Or ſhall we call the gaudy ſwarm which (like Flies and Inſects in Gleams of Sunſhine) do buzze and flutter in the Rays and warmth of Greatneſs and Proſperity? Shall we call theſe Happy? Ah! Theſe are they that furniſh Theatres and Poets with Tragic Stories; amongſt theſe, Reſtleſs Paſſions, Contemptible Levity, ungovernable Inſolence, wither'd and meagre Envy, wandring Luſt, Empty Pride, Loud and Senſeleſs Confidence, and finally ſhameful and fearful Sins have their abode: and can we call thoſe Happy who are infeſted with ſuch Legions of Evils? *Miſerere tu felicium*, they are their own burden whil'ſt they are other's Envy; Shall we then call the buſie

Knowl's *Turkiſh Hiſt.*

buſie trading World Happy? alas! theſe would have thought it a Happineſs not to have needed to trade or toil, they love Wealth, but moſt admire

Martial. *Res non parta labore ſed Relicta,*
Not Gold they labouring dig themſelves in Mines,
But what the toiling Anceſtor reſigns
To his more happy Iſſue.

Whom laſtly ſhall we call Happy? Surely if any, the Devout and Learned: theſe are the Souls that converſe with Heaven, that dwell continually in the pure Light, and feed upon the Bread, the Joyes of Angels. But alas, if Happineſs were the inſeparable Companion of Learning, how came the Stoic's ador'd *Cato* to be led by Pride and Humour and Vain-glory through burning Sands and dreadful Deſerts? how came he in a mood of deſperate Diſcontent to dye his own Murderer? Whence was it that the Learned and Eloquent *Tully* after ſo many brave Diſcourſes of the Contempt of Death and

and Pain, and briefly all humane Evils; did ſink ſo poorly under the weight of his Misfortunes? whence was it that after he had taught the Soul's Immortality, and its Tranſlation into ſome glorious Star, he ſhould at laſt be ſo unwilling to let it leave this vile Clod of Earth, and the Decay'd, Melancholy and darkſom Manſion of the Body? if Learning did put Men in poſſeſſion of Happineſs, why was our *Raleigh* ſo uneaſie, ſo unfortunate, not more tos't by a reſtleſs Fortune than a reſtleſs Mind? Why was our *Verulam* ſo utterly a Stranger to Happineſs in both Fortunes, as unable to govern and enjoy Proſperity aright as to bear up under Adverſity? if Learning were ſo Soveraign an Antidote againſt Miſery, if Philoſophy were ſuch a Paradiſe, and Speculations were ſuch luſcious Meals, the very fruits of the Garden; why do the Learned leave their Sacred ſhades to haunt the Houſes of great ones, or the Courts of Princes? why do they fawn and cringe, and with all imaginable aſſiduity and artifice labour to inſinuate themſelves into ſuch Men whoſe

whoſe Eſteem for them is a juſt Scandal to 'em, and their Favours but ſo many public marks of Reproach? O vileſt ſort of Servitude! can it conſiſt with the grandeur of a Philoſopher, with the true Liberty of a Chriſtian Spirit to lacquey ſome Favourite of Fortune, and for many years together with an obſtinate Stupidity digeſt the Capricies of his Humour, and not only diſſemble his Vices, but magnifie even his Vanity and Folly? and not this only, but there are ſlaviſh Arts of Inſinuation to be practiſed upon every one that's near him: O glorious Merit! when the ſame thing recommends the Philoſopher that doth the *Valet de Chambre*, or the Footman! and yet after all, even this Equals not the baſeneſs, the ſlavery of thoſe who proſtitute Philoſophy and themſelves to the Multitude, and make an Ignorant and Inſolent Herd the Arbitrary Soveraigns of their Principles, their Liberty, their Happineſs, for this depends upon their Popularity. O how far ſhould I prefer the humble Contented and Independent drudgery of an honeſt Hind, before

ſore this un-manly Servitude! how far ſhould I prefer the generous and undeſigning freedom and unconcernment of a Poet (whatever Ignorance or Contempt of Intereſt it may be traduc'd for) before the former ſort of ſervile Philoſophic Proggers!

And now there remains no place where Happineſs can as much as be ſuſpected to dwell, unleſs among the Devout and Religious. Theſe ſure live in Raptures and Transfigurations on the Mount, theſe ſure have their Converſation in Heaven, and from thence derive Glory, and Liberty, and Joy, and Peace and Hope, theſe are Partakers of Divine Nature, how can they therefore be deſtitute of a Divine Happineſs? But alas! behold the Bleſſed Jeſus, and we ſhall find him as the Pſalmiſt and the Prophets repreſent him, *A man of ſorrow, and acquainted with grief.* Hear again the moſt Zealous and the moſt Elevated of our Divine Maſter's Diſciples, *If in this life only we have hope in Chriſt, we are of all men the moſt miſerable.* 1 Cor. 15. 19.

*O Happineſs!*
*Thou Bleſſed State or rather pleaſing ſound,*
*Thou always ſought and never to be found!*
*In what Grot, do'ſt thou, or what Cell,*
*Or in what Court or Temple dwell?*
*Where and what art thou? art thou merely Name,*
*No otherwiſe known than by Report and Fame?*
*Art a Reality? or art thou juſt*
*Like public Good and public Truſt,*
*A ſolemn, ſacred, but deceitful Notion.*

Obj. anſwer'd.

But to return from this Revery, this is after all but a ſlight and popular Objection, which from the Evil Conſequences which attend the Sins and Follies of the Multitude, and from thoſe Complaints which humane Infirmity has ſometimes wrung from the wiſe and vertuous, would unſoundly and illogically infer, that there is no ſuch thing as Happineſs here below: and yet this Opinion hath ſo univerſally poſſeſſed Mankind, that they

ſeem

ſeem to teach with too general a Conſent, that Happineſs is to be Expected only in another World; and this Doctrine is very commonly thought to have the Countenance and Patronage of Divine Revelation. Theſe falſe Perſwaſions have not a little obſtructed the Happineſs of Man, deterring men at once from the Embracing of the Goſpel, and from the purſuit of true Happineſs. I will therefore,

Firſt, Endeavour to free this Aſſertion, *That Happineſs is attainable in this World*, from that Prejudice which the Authority of Revelation ſeems to ſome to bring upon it, by a brief account of the ſenſe of Revelation in this Point.

Secondly, I will endeavour to make good the Truth of it by plain and obvious Proofs.

Thirdly, I will anſwer this and what other Objections may be ſtarted from an Imaginary incapacity of Happineſs caus'd by Fortune, Fate, or Nature,

## SECT. I.

*As to the ſenſe of Revelation in this Point.*

*Religion denies not the poſſibility of preſent Happineſs.*

REligion ever had, and always muſt have the Character of it's Author viſibly ſtamp't upon it; nothing that is not infinitely kind and infinitely wiſe can be found in any part of Revelation truly Divine, from whence we may rationally conclude, that the great aim of God in the Eſtabliſhing Religion is to advance the Happineſs of Man, and to advance it in a Method Conſonant to thoſe natural Principles he has implanted in him: Nor did any one-inſpir'd-Author ever think otherwiſe; *He that keepeth the Law* (ſaith *Solomon*) *Happy is he.* Prov. 29. *Great Peace have they that love thy Law, and nothing ſhall offend them.* Pſal. 119. *Happy is the man that findeth Wiſdom, and the man that getteth Underſtanding.* Prov. 3. That this was to be underſtood of actual and preſent Happineſs in this life is apparent from what follows a little after,

after, *Length of days are in her right hand, and in her left hand Riches and Honour. Her ways are ways of pleaſantneſs, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to thoſe that lay hold upon her.* And thô the Goſpel as a higher and more perfect Diſpenſation doth propoſe to us as our great and Chief End, Life, and Immortality, yet it doth by no means exclude us from Happineſs here; but rather doth eſtabliſh it upon proper and firm Foundations; and fences it about with Impregnable Bulwarks. *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the world gives, give I unto you; let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.* John 14. 27. *Now the fruit of the Spirit is joy, peace,* &c. Gal. 5. 22. *Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, and make you abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghoſt.* Rom. 15. *Godlineſs is profitable to all things, having promiſe of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.* 1 Tim. 4. 8. Nor can I indeed conceive how the ſtate of a Righteous and Holy Soul ſhould be other than a Happy and

bleſſed one: The belief and confident Expectation of a Heaven muſt needs be more tranſporting and raviſhing than the richeſt Fancy of a Sinner, and that Security both in reſpect of this and a future life, which a good Man enjoys in the Protection of God and the Aſſurance of his Favour, who is Almighty, Immutable, &c. muſt infinitely exceed any thing that a Sinner can attain to, and muſt exclude thoſe uneaſie Fears which do frequently interrupt the Sinner's Enjoyment and o'recaſt his hopes: he that loves God and Vertue, cannot but be Happy in the daily Practice and Enjoyment of what he moſt delights in: and he, laſtly, that hath ſubdued his Paſſions and o'recome the World, cannot chooſe but reap the daily Fruits of ſo glorious a Conqueſt, and be conſtantly entertain'd with pleaſing Reflexions and delightful Proſpects; and yet if he ſhould enjoy nothing elſe, that Soveraignty, Liberty, Magnanimity, and Divine Charity, and Enlargement of Soul which he thereby gains, were an abundant Reward of his Victory. The

ſum

ſum of all is this, A good Man has the beſt Title to the Bleſſings of this life, and the Glories of another, he enjoys this World with as great Security as Wiſdom and Moderation, and has an aſſur'd hope of a far better when he quits this; the Anticipations of which by Faith, Love, and Hope, do at once facilitate and confirm his Conqueſt over all unworthy Luſts, and entertain him with unexpreſſible Satisfaction and Pleaſure.

For this Reaſon, I do in this Chapter diſcourſe of Happineſs without that immediate regard to another life, which might be expected: not judging my ſelf oblig'd either to prove the Certainty of it, or to demonſtrate the Reaſonableneſs of embracing Miſery during the ſpace of this ſhort life, in Expectation of that Perfect and Eternal Happineſs which is promiſed hereafter; ſince I ſaw well enough that in the ordinary courſe of Providence, the Happineſs of this life and the other, were not incompatible: but on the Contrary, that that wherein the Life and Being of true Happineſs in this

World doth consist, was but a necessary Introduction to, or Qualification of us for the Happiness of another; which doth in some measure already appear, and will much more in the progress of the following Discourses.

*The Doctrine of the Cross no Obstruction of this life's Happiness.* Math. 16. 24.

But what becomes now of the Doctrine of the Cross? this is a very soft and mild Commentary upon that of our Saviour, *If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his Cross and follow me.* But this is not so formidable an Objection as it may at first sight seem, 'tis true Suffering through all the Progress and Stages of Evils even to the last, that is, Death it self, was a Common, nay almost an Universal Duty in the beginning of Christianity, being indispensibly Necessary to the Propagation of the Gospel; but blessed be God, the obligation of that Duty has long ago ceas'd; And all that I can think necessary to be said here in pursuance of my Design is, That the Pleasures of those Confessors and Martyrs did far out-weigh their Sufferings whil'st they lived; That when they suffer'd Death it self, the time was come

come when they muſt exchange Temporal for Eternal Happineſs: Nor doth this at all infringe the Truth of my Propoſition, which doth not vainly aſſert an Eternal Duration of Happineſs in this life, but only teaches the poſſibility of attaining it. And I think the Death of Martyrs and Confeſſors, is rather a great Confirmation than Confutation of this Opinion: teaching us plainly that in deſpight of all Calamities, 'tis not only poſſible to live, but to dy Happily; which laſt is no ſmall acceſſion to Temporal Happineſs. From this little I have ſaid on this Occaſion, 'tis eaſie to ſhape an anſwer to what is objected from St. *Paul*, *If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men moſt miſerable*; 'tis confeſſedly indiſputably true, that had theſe Chriſtians been deſtitute of that hope which was their Support, they had ſunk under the weight of ſuch Sufferings, and ſo had been the moſt miſerable of all men: but ſince their hopes did not only ſupport 'em under their Afflictions, but alſo render 'em ſomewhat 1 Cor. 15.

more than Conquerours; all that can follow hence is, That the Resurrection and Eternal life are unquestionable Truths, and that he who believes 'em as firmly as Confessors and Martyrs did, may like them be *Happy*, thô a thousand Seas of Calamities and Troubles should break in upon him.

*Mortification recommended by the Light of Nature as subservient to our present Happiness.*

As to Mortification which is a Duty of perpetual Obligation, (for the Purity of Religion is still the same, thô its fortune in the World be alter'd) this did at first signifie the Renunciation and Extirpation of Jewish and Pagan Lusts, according to that of St. *Paul*, Col. 3. 5. *Mortifie therefore your members which are upon the Earth; Fornication, Uncleanness, Inordinate affection, Evil Concupiscence, and Covetousness which is Idolatry*; and it still signifies the same thing, and whatever difficulty we are to encounter in the performance of this Duty, it must be vanquished, for 'tis impossible to be wicked and Happy: a wicked man is his own *Hell*, and every Passion, every Lust is a Fiend, a Fury that doth outrage and torment him: and all this the Heathens

thens themſelves did not only conſtantly acknowledge, but alſo paint out with as lively Eloquence as any Chriſtian could ever do: their Experience, (over whom Sin had an uncontrolled dominion) moſt effectually convincing 'em of the Outrages, Tyranny, and unſpeakable Miſchiefs of wicked and abominable Paſſions; Nay, ſo manifeſt is it that the ſubduing theſe Irregular Paſſions is neceſſary to our Happineſs, that even the Epicureans themſelves (notwithſtanding their confining the Happineſs of Man to this ſhort life, and by a probable Conſequence, reſolving it ultimately into the Enjoyments of the Body) did yet look upon themſelves as extremely injur'd by *Tully*, and others, when they repreſented 'em as revolted from, and Enemies to Vertue. 'Tis not my buſineſs here to Examine what foundation for Vertue their Philoſophy could leave, or what rank and place they could aſſign it, 'tis enough that they could not but acknowledge it as neceſſary to Happineſs.

'Tis

'Tis true, Mortification in the Gospel-sense requires us not only to restrain these Irregular Lusts, but also not to over-rate and over-value this World and the things of it; not to look upon this life as our only or chief Portion, and doat upon it with fondness and passion; and I cannot think that this is any thing more than what is imply'd and included in the former Notion of Mortification: this Moderation of our Inclinations to the World, being a proper and necessary foundation of the former Abstinence; it being very Improbable that he who values and doats upon the World above all things, should refrain from irregular Pursuits and Enjoyments of it. Now even this Degree of Mortification was as clearly taught, and the Necessity of it in order to Happiness, by the Wise men amongst the Heathens, as by our Saviour and his Apostles, by those conducted by the Light of Nature, as by these conducted by the Light of Revelation: and that together with the Discipline which promotes it, I mean the observation of great Abstinence from sensual

ſual Pleaſures: No Monk or Anchoret can ſpeak with a more glorious contempt of the World than a Stoic; but their flights who would allow the Body, the World, and the things of it no place nor degree in the Number of Good things are too daring and bold to lay any ſtreſs upon; but the Opinion of other Philoſophers who allow'd theſe their proper place and value ought to be of weight with us, becauſe they ſhew us plainly, That Mortification was ever thought by the Light of Nature ſubſervient to our true Happineſs. *Hierocles* in the beginning of his Divine Comments gives us a ſhort but full account of the Pythagorean (and I may add, Platonic Philoſophy) in this Point. Φιλοσοφία ἐστὶ ζωῆς ἀνθρωπίνης κάθαρσις, καὶ τελειότης. κάθαρσις μὲν ἀπὸ τῆς ὑλικῆς ἀλλογίας, καὶ τοῦ θνητοῦ δὲς σώματος. τελειότης δὲ τῆς οἰκείας εὐζωΐας ἀνάληψις, πρὸς τὴν θείαν ὁμοίωσιν ἐπανάγουσα. ταύτα δὲ πέφυκεν ἀρετὴ καὶ ἀλήθεια κάλιστα ἀπεργάζεσθαι· ἢ μὲν τὴν ἀμετρίαν τῶν παθῶν ἐξορίζουσα. ἡ δὲ τὸ θεῖον εἶδος, εὐφυῶς ἔχουσα, προσκτωμένη. The ſubſtance of which is, *The buſineſs of Philoſophy is*

*to*

*to purifie the Soul of Man from ſenſual Luſts and inordinate Paſſions, and to transform it into the likeneſs and Image of God; This is that which it purſues by diſcovering to us Excellent Truths, and by recommending to us the practice of Excellent Vertues.* And this was that Philoſophy which the beſt and acuteſt of the Heathens look't upon as the only way to Happineſs, ſo far were they from judging it inconſiſtent and incompatible with it; nay, they deem'd this very ſtate of Vertue a ſtate of more Exalted Happineſs, and an Image of the Divine Life: hence is that little leſs than Inſpir'd Heat or Rapture of *Tully*, *Cùm animus cognitis perceptiſq; virtutibus à Corporis obſequio, indulgentiaq; diſceſſerit, voluptatemq; ſicut labem decoris oppreſſerit, omnemq; mortis Doloriſq; timorem effugerit, Societatemq; Charitatis coierit cum ſuis, omneſq; natura conjunctos ſuos duxerit, Cultumq; Deorum & puram Religionem ſuſceperit, & exacuerit illam, ut oculorum ſic Ingenii Aciem ad bona deligenda & rejicienda Contraria. Quid eo dici aut excogitari poterit beatius?* When the Soul

L. 2. de Leg.

Soul having diſcover'd and entertain'd Vertue, has extinguiſh't its fondneſs for, and indulgence of the Body, and ſtifled Luſt as the Reproach and Stain of its Honour and Beauty, and hath put off all dread of Death and Pain, &c. What can be ſaid, or as much as fancied, more bleſſed than the ſtate of ſuch a man? Nay, after all, the greateſt Patrons and Abettors of Pleaſure did ever acknowledge this moderation in our Paſſions and Enjoyments indiſpenſibly Neceſſary to our Happineſs.

*Nil admirari prope res eſt una Numici*
*Solaq; quæ poſſit facere ac ſervare beatos.* Hor.

Nought to admire's the thing alone that can
Cauſe and Preſerve the Happineſs of Man.

And 'tis well known how much the followers of *Epicurus* gloried in his Abſtinence; that theſe Voluptuaries ſhould preſcribe and practiſe the Doctrine of Mortification! but this they were compelled to by the irreſiſtible force of Reaſon; for how can he who doats

doats upon the World, and melts in ſoft and ſenſual Pleaſures, be able to ſecure the repoſe of his Mind againſt thoſe melancholy Alterations which may daily and ſome time or other will certainly befall himſelf and his Enjoyments? on what foundation can the Peace or Liberty of his Mind be Eſtabliſh't? or can he be Happy who is diſtreſs't by every change of Weather, and is divided and diſtracted between numerous, contrary Paſſions, and a ſlave to each?

To come to a Concluſion, the Scripture is ſo far from denying, that it do's affirm the poſſibility of attaining Happineſs; nor are the Sufferings of Confeſſors and Martyrs, or the Doctrine of Mortification any prejudice to this Aſſertion; for neither Affliction nor Mortification are inconſiſtent with the true Happineſs of Man; that Affliction is not, the Example of thoſe very Martyrs and Confeſſors triumphing over it do's ſufficiently evince; that Mortification is not, is unanimouſly confeſs'd by the Suffrages of ſuch as were conducted by the Light of Nature,

ture, and of ſuch too as were entirely devoted to the Pleaſures of this life, and that upon undeniable Grounds.

Having thus remov'd this firſt Objection againſt the Poſſibility of attaining Happineſs by vindicating Scripture from Requiring any thing injurious to the Happineſs of this life, or aſſerting any thing that may damp or diſcourage our hopes of it, it is now high time to proceed to the ſecond thing I propos'd; that is,

## SECT. II.

TO make good the Truth of this Aſſertion, *That Happineſs may be attain'd* by plain and obvious Proofs. And here that I may not be miſtaken, I think 'tis fit that I ſhould tell the Reader, that I do not promiſe him a Heaven upon Earth, that I do not promiſe him the Happineſs of Angels but of Men; and that I do not underſtand Happineſs in this Propoſition of that which is every way perfect and abſolute, to which fancy it ſelf

*The Happineſs of this life granted Imperfect.*

ſelf can add nothing, but of that which is like our Nature incomplete and imperfect, ſpeaking Comparatively, and yet truly great and excellent in it ſelf too. *Seneca* doth ſomewhere deſcribe his Happy man much after this manner, "He is one who deſpiſes all thoſe "things which are ſubject to Change, "who accounts nothing good or bad "but Vertue or Vice, who is not puffe "up by proſperous Events nor caſt "down by Adverſe ones, one whoſe "great Pleaſure is to deſpiſe Pleaſure, "one above either Deſire or Fear, con"tent with the Riches which are the "true and proper poſſeſſion of Vertue, "and coveting nothing more; ſuch a "one, he thinks cannot chooſe but be "Happy. And I think ſo too, and I fear a great deal Happier than any man on Earth can ever be; this is a gay Dream, but well-ſuiting that Philoſophy which requires the Tranquillity and Steadineſs or Conſtancy of God to be joyn'd with the frailty of Man; a Compoſition of things infinitely more incompatible than that of an Immortal Soul and Mortal Body

can

can be fancy'd to be: for my part, I am content to call a Building beautiful, thô there be ſomething in it which doth not anſwer the Teſt of the ſtricteſt Art, or at leaſt of the moſt accurate fancy; I am content to call it Day, thô flitting Clouds and Showers do now and then a little obſcure the Light: ſo can I not chooſe but call him Righteous who is ſincere thô not perfect, whoſe life is generally ſpeaking bright and exemplary, thô not utterly void of ſpots and blemiſhes, whoſe motion is a progreſs towards Vertue, thô it be ſometimes retarded, nay ſometimes interrupted: and ſo am I content to think him a Happy man, not who is utterly exempt from all diſturbances in Mind or Body, not who lives in conſtant Extaſie; but him whoſe Pleaſures are more and greater than his Troubles, whoſe Hopes are more and greater than his Fears: one whoſe Enjoyments, thô they do not tranſport, do ſatisfie him; one whoſe Serenity and Calm of mind, though it may ſuffer Interruptions, ſuffer but few and ſlight ones: I will intreat the Rea-

der to admit of this Notion of Happineſs here, till we gradually advance to a clear and full diſcovery of it. Now as we are not to lay aſide any advice of being Vertuous, becauſe we cannot arrive at the height and conſtancy of holy Angels; ſo neither are we to caſt off all thoughts of Happineſs, becauſe we cannot equal theirs: for if we are Happy in ſuch a degree as the Imperfection of our Nature and this Inferiour ſtate will permit; if we can free our ſelves from thoſe Miſeries which do involve the fooliſh and vicious part of Mankind, if we can poſſeſs our ſelves of thoſe humble and modeſt joys that Humane Nature is here capable of, it will be worth all the time and travail we can ſpend upon the Deſign: and that we may advance thus far, the following Conſiderations will, I think, render it more than probable.

*The poſſibility, &c. prov'd.*

*Becauſe ſome are happier than others.*

1. It cannot be deny'd but that ſome Men are more Happy, or at leaſt leſs Miſerable than others; who will deny *Titus* to have been infinitely more Happy than *Nero*? *Titus* whoſe Government of the *Roman* People was not more

more mild and gentle than the impartial Reflexions of his Conſcience upon himſelf and actions, if we credit *Suetonius* in his Relation of his Death? *Nero* that guilty Wretch, whoſe Conſcience was no leſs a Plague to him than he to *Rome*? Who preſers not the Character of *Mitio* in the Comedian before that of *Demea*? *Mitio* whoſe ſmooth and kind as well as prudent Behaviour rendred him eaſie and amiable to his Family and Relations, and made the Fortune of his whole life flow calmly and gently to the End: *Demea* whoſe ſour, ſuſpicious and ſevere Behaviour did exaſperate and ruffle the minds of all that related to him, and did diſturb and muddy that ſtream of his affairs, which would have otherwiſe run ſmooth and clear: who will compare the pleaſant Retirements, the modeſt Contentments, the regular & virtuous Enjoyments of *Atticus*, with the turbulent popularity of *Gracchus* or the fatal Luxuries of *Catiline*, or the proud Cruelties of *Sylla* and *Marius*? what then? Shall we attribute no ſhare of Happineſs or Miſery to the

Sueton. *in vitâ* Titi.

*Terent.*

Vertues or the Vices of the one or other? or no part of their Vertues or Vices to themselves, but to (I know not) what fatal and irresistible Causes? If we assert the former, with frontless Confidence we contradict unquestionable Matters of Fact; if the latter, we rob the Vertuous of that merit which rendred 'em belov'd in their Lives, and ever since has preserv'd their Memories Sacred and Honourable, and we acquit those from all blame or guilt which the Laws of their own Countrey and the Common sense of Mankind have ever condemn'd and detested. What gross and monstrous absurdities are these? shall we now after the Improvement of so many Ages (for we pretend to grow more Wise and Learned daily) dispute whether Vice or Vertue be the better guide of Humane Actions, or the more serviceable to Humane Life? Shall Sloth and Luxury be thought to conduce as much to the prosperity and decency of our Lives, as Industry and frugal Temperance? Shall Ambition, Pride, and Choler be now judg'd as instrumental

to promote or preſerve the Peace and repoſe of our Minds and States, as Modeſty, Meekneſs, and Charity? or if this be too daring a defiance to Senſe and Experience, ſhall we contend that the ſlothful and luxurious, the unjuſt, and cruel, &c. are as blameleſs and innocent; nay, if we will extend Principles to their juſt Conſequence, as commendable and worthy of Praiſe as the Induſtrious and Temperate, the Meek and Gentle, the Juſt and Charitable? for this muſt inevitably follow, if neither Men's Vertues nor Vices be in any degree to be aſcribed to themſelves: wretched and deſperate is that ſhift that equals the juſt and unjuſt, the induſtrious and the ſluggard, the great Mind that ſtands upright under and outbraves Misfortune, and the degenerous one which effeminately ſhrinks and breaks under it! wretched the Shift that equals the Tyrant and moſt gracious Prince, the loyalleſt Subject and the Traitor, the faithful Friend and the perfidious Flatterer, and all this we muſt be driven to, or elſe, as we cannot deny, that ſome are

Happier than others, ſo we muſt not deny that the Happineſs of the one, or Miſery of the other, is owing in ſome meaſure at leaſt to their Vertues and Vices, and theſe to themſelves. And if this be true, 'tis evident, we may be Happy if we will; and thô we may not equal the moſt Happy (for I will not exclude Temper, Education, Fortune from all ſhare in Men's Miſery or Happineſs) yet ſince every degree of Happineſs is truly valuable, let us with all our might endeavour to be as Happy as we can.

Horat. *Nec quia deſperes invicti membri Glyconis,*
*Nodoſa Corpus noli prohibere Chyragra,*
*Eſt quiddam prodire tenus* ——

The mighty *Glyco*'s ſtrength you can't attain,
Don't therefore ſcorn to free your Limbs from Pain
Of Knotty Gout? Eaſe, thô not Strength to gain,
Is no ſmall Happineſs ——

But to purſue our proof,

2. It

2. It is a great abſurdity to confound or equal Vertue and Vice, bnt 'tis not the greateſt they commit who deny the poſſibility of attaining Happineſs; for he that baniſhes Happineſs out of the World, do's at the ſame time baniſh Good and Evil out of it too: for Good being nothing elſe but the ſubſerviency of ſome things to our true Intereſt and Pleaſure, and Evil the tendency of others to our trouble and injury; it muſt needs follow if there be Good and Evil in the World, that he who has a greater ſhare of Good than Evil is a Happy man; and he that denieth Good and Evil, may with as plauſible a Confidence deny all Humane Paſſions, and aſſert that there is neither Love nor Hatred, neither Joy nor Grief, nor Hope, nor Fear, nor Pity, nor Envy; for Good or Evil are the Objects or Cauſes of all theſe. I may then, I think, take it for granted, that no man will take the Confidence to ſay, that there is no ſuch thing as Good or Evil in the World; and conſequently all men muſt be oblig'd to acknowledge ſuch a ſtate as Happi-

*Becauſe there is Good and Evil in the World.*

neſs in the World too, unleſs they will affirm one of theſe three things, either Firſt, That Evil grows up every where in thick Crops; Good thin, ſcatter'd and rarely to be found, epecially grown up to its maturity; That conſequently there are none whoſe ſhare of Evil doth not infinitely outweigh that of Good. Or Secondly, That Evil hath ſo much of Venom and Malignity in it, that a little Evil contributes more to our Miſery than a great Deal of Good can to our Happineſs; ſo ripe and full grown, is Evil, ſo lank, undergrown, and every way imperfect, is Good in this World. Or Thirdly, That we our ſelves can contribute nothing to that Good or Evil which is our Portion, 'tis the Product not of Reaſon or Induſtry, but of Time and Chance, or of ſome other Principle which is not in our Power. All theſe deſerve to be weigh'd, not only becauſe the Examination of 'em will tend to chear and encourage the Minds of Men, and to render the great Creator and Governour of the World more dear and venerable to us; but alſo, becauſe

cauſe it will be of ſome uſe and ſervice to the whole Inquiry.

1. *Evils not more than Goods in the World.*

Firſt, Therefore let us examine what Truth there is in that fancy which ſuppoſes the weight and number of Evils in the World infinitely to exceed that of Good things. I know there are a ſort of ſour and murmuring, of proud and ambitious Wretches, who deal with their God, as with their Prince or Patrons; and eſtimate Favours and Benefits, not according to their Merit, but Expectation; greedy and haughty Expectation, which even Prodigal Bounty cannot ſatisfie: 'tis the ſtrange temper of ſome men that they wither and grow lean with Diſcontent and Envy; even whil'ſt their ſtudied Meals diſtract the wanton Appetite, and their very Attendance are ſleek, and full, and fat with the Remains of their Feaſts; and the meaneſt of their Relations thrive into Pride and Inſolence by the mere ſprinklings of their Plenty: I know 'tis Natural to ſome to Blaſpheme God and the King, to quarrel with and reproach Providence, and the Government; while loaded

loaded with good things, they ſtretch themſelves on Silken Couches under Roofs of Cedar, or loll at Eaſe in their gilt Coaches; and yet at the ſame time the honeſt Countrey-man, who with Security thô much Drudgery Ploughs, and Sows, and Reaps a few Acres, Eats his plain Meals with Cheerfulneſs, Sleeps without Diſturbance, Bleſſes God, and magnifies the goodneſs of his Prince: The Contentment of the One is an evident proof of the Divine Bounty and Goodneſs, whoſe Proviſion doth far exceed the Neceſſities of his Creatures: The Diſcontent of th'other can be no diſparagement to the Goodneſs of our Creator, who has dealt extremely liberally with 'em, thô they enjoy not what they poſſeſs: we are not therefore to judge of the World by the Clamours and Invectives of ſuch as are always mutinous and diſſatisfy'd, but by the ſuffrages of thoſe humble, modeſt, and grateful Souls who know how to value the Favours of Heaven and themſelves as they ought to do; who do not marr and corrupt every Bleſſing by Peeviſhneſs,

or

or Envy, or Pride, or Wantonneſs, but can weigh their Enjoyments, their Hopes, and their Merits in juſt and equal Ballances, and diſcerning how much the one do's exceed the other, chearfully adore and praiſe the World's Author and Governour. If this Controverſie were to be determin'd by ſuch, we ſhould find theſe even under uneaſie and Tyrannical Governments, and in the more barren and niggardly Countries, confuting this Objection by their Chearfulneſs and Contentment: what would they have done, if Providence had planted 'em there where a fertile Soil and thriving Trade had unladed the Wealth and Plenty of the World into their Arms, and a mild and gentle Government had ſecur'd and guarded their Enjoyments? But let us decide the Controverſie not by Votes but Reaſons, let us conſider the State and Nature of the World; is there one in a Thouſand who is left utterly unfurniſh't of all means of wiſe and wholeſome Inſtruction, which is the Good of the Soul of Man? or is there one in a Thouſand maim'd and defective

ctive in the Powers and Faculties of the Soul, or Senſes and Members of the Body? is there one in a Thouſand born under ſo unlucky and envious Planets that he cannot by any Induſtry or Vertue provide himſelf a comfortable Subſiſtence? View and Survey the World; Examine and Conſider Man, and then tell me whether there be any room for thoſe Reproaches and ſpiteful Reflexions by which ſome men have ſo outrag'd Nature and Providence? *Phylo Judæus* tells us a Rabbinical Story to this purpoſe, that when God had created the World, he demanded of a Prophet, whether he ſaw any thing wanting to conſummate and compleat the glorious Work; who told him, *Nothing*, but an Intelligent Being to praiſe the wiſe and gracious Architect: God approving the Advice, &c. The Hebrew Philoſophers (it ſeems) thought the World exactly perfect, ſuch a Work as might beſpeak God the Author of it: and no wonder, for they were inſpired by *Moſes*, who brings in God reflecting upon his own Creation, thus: *And God ſaw every*

*Phylo-Jud. de Plantatione Noæ.*

*every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good.* How unlike is all this to the Epicurean Philoſophy, whoſe great Patron *Lucretius* endeavours to infer from the Ill-Contrivance, the manifold Defects, the innumerable Evils of the World, that God could not be the Creatour of it! That ever that Work by which God deſign'd to exalt his Glory ſhould be drawn into an occaſion of Diſhonouring and Reproaching them! That ever that work which deſerv'd the praiſes of Men and Angels, ſhould at laſt ſtand in need of Apologies and Defences! If we look up to the Heavens, ſuch is the Beauty of thoſe Bodies, ſo uniform and regular their Motions, ſo exactly are they diſpos'd both for Ornament and Service, that the Speculation naturally exalts the Mind, and inſenſibly raiſes it above the Body: Nay, it has tempted ſome to think every Star moved and acted by ſome underſtanding Spirit. If we look upon the Earth, ſo wonderful is the Variety, ſo inconceivable the Wealth and Plenty of it, that it is not only ſufficient for the Needs and Gen. 1.

and Deſires of the Sober and Temperate, but even for the Luxury and Wantonneſs of the fancyful and Intemperate: Every place almoſt is a Paradiſe, there is no Country almoſt which cannot afford us *Tempe*, or *Campania*, *opus gaudentis naturæ*, a Work which Nature ſeems to have Created when in the gayeſt and the kindeſt humour. If there were room for fancy in Sacred things, one would almoſt think that *Moſes* out of Ignorance of other Countries or love of his own, had confin'd *Eden* within thoſe narrow Bounds he ſets it: and that it had only been loſt there, becauſe a fuller Diſcovery of the World had now found it almoſt every where: This is the World we complain of. Let us now conſider Man, and we ſhall find with the Pſalmiſt *that he is wonderfully made, he is but a little lower than the Angels; he is crown'd with Glory and Honour, and all the Creatures are put under his Feet: All the Fowls of the Air, and all the Beaſts of the Field, &c.* How infinitely wiſe as well as kind do's God appear in his Contrivance? So modeſt

Pſal. 139.

Pſal. 8.

are

his Appetites that a ſmall Portion of Nature's good is a full Meal or Feaſt, and yet ſo various, that there is nothing in all the proviſion, in all the joyes and luxuries of Nature, which he is not capable of Taſting and Enjoying: If we regard the Mind of Man, 'tis capable of a moſt ſurprizing Satisfaction in the Contemplation of the hidden Powers, the ſecret Laws and Operations of Nature; nay, it riſes higher, it paſſes the Bounds of Mechanic Nature, it entertains it ſelf with Moral Perfections, and the Spiritual Excellencies of an inviſible World, and gazes on thoſe Charms and Glories which are not ſubject to the bodily Eye: *Vultus nimis lubricos aſpici:* Such is the Nature of the Soul that when it pleaſes it can retire within it ſelf, withdraw from Senſe, and be ſecure and Happy in its own Strength and Wealth, *Ipſa ſuis pollens opibus*, and when it pleaſes it can walk forth like *Dinah* to ſee the Daughters of the Land, thoſe Beauties that Senſe preſents it with, and that too (if guarded by aweful Vertue) without the Danger of a Rape.

Rape. To ſay all of it in a word, 'tis capable of a ſhare in all the Good, and not neceſſarily ſubject to any of the Evil of this World.

——*Fatis avolſa Voluntas.*
There are no Fates that can controul
The ſoveraign freedom of the Soul.

If this be a true account of Man, and the ſtate of that World which he inhabits, if the one be fill'd with all things Neceſſary and Delightful, and the other be endow'd with all thoſe Capacities and Appetites that fit him to enjoy 'em, nay, if his Soul can raiſe it ſelf above the Pleaſures, and exempt it ſelf from the Changes and Revolutions of it, nothing is more manifeſt than that the Evil in life cannot be greater than the Good, unleſs it be owing to our ſelves; and to leave this matter beyond Diſpute, no man pretending to receive Revelation ſhould admit of the contrary Opinion, for no Texts of Divine Writ are more plain than thoſe which proclaim to us God's love of Mankind: *that he doth not afflict*

*afflict or grieve willingly the Children of men*, that the Book of Creation and Providence is writ all over with the legible Characters of Love, ſo legible that it renders the Idolatry and Wickedneſs of the Gentiles inexcuſable, and finally that *he gives us Richly all things to enjoy*: where the Apoſtle excellently expreſſes at once the Bounty and Deſign of God. His Bounty in that he gives us all things *Richly*; his Deſign, not to enkindle and then delude our Deſires, by being like the Tree of Life or Knowledge forbidden us, but on purpoſe to be enjoy'd by us: So then the Chriſtian cannot without contradicting Revelation embrace this Opinion, nor the Atheiſt or Epicurean without contradicting himſelf: if Nature has contriv'd the World ſo ill, if it has ſcatter'd good things with ſuch a ſparing and envious hand, whence are all thoſe Tranſports and Extaſies we meet with amongſt theſe Men? what is the Ground? what is the Matter of 'em? whence ſo rich a Crop of Worldly ſenſual Pleaſures? whence ſo much dotage on, and fondneſs for the World 1 Tim. 6.

we ſo complain of? whence are th
Charms and Irreſiſtible Temptation
which the generality of Mankind
vanquiſh't by? whence is it that Me
are ſo willing to ſet up their Reſt
this ſide *Canaan*? whence that dread
and averſion of Death as the moſt fo
midable Evil? If Nature has been ſuc
a Step-mother to Man, if it has fr
wardly and peeviſhly deſign'd him l
tle elſe but Miſchief, whence that
gacity and penetration of Mind ſea
ching with delight into all the Retir
ments of Nature? whence that Com
prehenſive and almoſt immenſe Cap
city of Pleaſure? whence that ſtreng
and greatneſs of Soul, enabling n
only to confront, but to deſpiſe Evil
and to be Happy in deſpight of 'em
theſe are Advantages ſo incomparab
great and good, that no Evils can b
ballanced againſt 'em: and 'tis Eviden
that no Writings, no not of the Stoic
themſelves were ever more ſtuffed wit
boaſting and daring accounts of th
Nature of Man, than thoſe of the Epi
cureans. And thus from all put toge
ther, whether we conſult the Natur
and

and ſtate of the World and Man, teſtimony of Revelation or Reaſon, the Suffrages of the good humour'd and grateful part of Mankind, or the Confeſſions of the Voluptuous and Atheiſtical, 'tis Evident that Good do's outweigh Evil in the Deſign of God or Nature. But have I not my ſelf in the beginning of this Treatiſe preſented the Reader with a large Catalogue of Evils? Yes, But not of God's Creation but our own: for the Truth of the whole is ταράσσει τοὺς ἀνθρώπους οὐ τὰ πράγματα, ἀλλὰ περὶ τῶν πραγμάτων δόγματα. Not things themſelves but the Shades and Fantaſms, wanton, ſuperſtitious, effeminate or froward Minds do raiſe about 'em, diſturb the quiet and repoſe of Man. So then, if we our ſelves do not multiply the Number of our Evils, our ſhare of Good in life may be much greater than our ſhare of Evil; and if we be not acceſſory to our own Miſery, we may be Happy. Unleſs,

Secondly, Evil hath ſo much of Venom and Malignity in it, that a little Evil contributes more to our Miſery, than

*2. The Efficacy of Evil not greater than that of Good.*

than a great deal of Good can to our Happineſs. We may here judge of the force and energy of Good and Evil either by that Influence they generally *have*, or that they *ought* to *have* upon the ſtate of Mankind: if we conſider what Impreſſions they *ought* to make upon Men, the queſtion will come to a ſpeedy and a Happy Iſſue; for then we muſt either reckon nothing an Evil but a Moral one, that is Sin and Vice; or at leaſt we muſt acknowledge that the Venom and Malignity of other Evils is not comparable to that of Moral ones: This latter opinion is an unqueſtionable Truth, for who will not make a wide difference between a Misfortune and a Crime, between an Affliction and a Puniſhment, between thoſe Inconveniences, Trouble, and Pain which we ſuffer as guilty Criminals, and thoſe we ſuffer as unfortunate Innocents, or afflicted Hero's or Saints? for notwithſtanding the Evils or Pains ſhould be in the matter of 'em the ſame; yet there is a vaſt difference in the Suffering, the one makes Man much more miſerable than the other;

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for our Misfortunes ſhould only reach the Body not the Mind: But when we ſuffer for our Crimes, the whole Man ſuffers, the Soul as well as Body: Misfortunes, when the Storm is o'repaſt leave no deform'd Ruines, no Wounds nor Scars behind 'em; but our Crimes leave ſtains and guilt behind, which haunt the Mind with perpetual horrour. From this Diſtinction of the Nature and Effect of Evils we may infer this Comfortable Concluſion; That nothing can make man wholly, truly miſerable but himſelf; Nothing can oppreſs him by the weight of Moral Evils, but his own Choice, for nothing can compel or neceſſitate him to be wicked; the ſtroaks, the wounds of natural Evils (ſo I will call all the reſt diſtinct from moral and owing their Being to the Revolutions of time and Chance and Nature, &c.) are faint and ſlight; the Mind of Man ought not to ſuffer it ſelf to be too deeply and ſenſibly affected by them: it is the work of Reaſon and Religion to fortifie the Mind againſt the Impreſſions of theſe Evils: and truly that Mind that

is furnish't with true Notions of things, with a rational and solid Faith, with steady and well-grounded hopes may bear the impetuous shock of all these Waves and Storms, calm and unmov'd; Nay, I may boldly affirm, not only that Vertue checks and controuls these Evils, blunts their Edge and abates their force; but what is more, that their natural strength, their own proper force is weak and contemptible; unless our own Vices be combin'd and confederated with 'em against us: Our Pride must aid our Enemy to render his affront provoking; Our Covetousness and Ambition must assist Fortune to render its Contempt or Hatred of us destructive to the Tranquillity of our state. Falshood under a disguise of Friendship could never have abus'd our Confidence, by betraying our Infirmities, or forsaking us in Affliction, had not our own folly and self-conceit first betray'd us, exposing us a naked prey to Flattery and Treachery: The Coldness or Neglect of great Men could never wound us, the hollow deceitful Professions of those above us could ne-

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ver fool or fret us, did not the fondneſs of our own deſires betray us firſt into vain Preſumption and a flattering Credulity: The Storm that ſnatcheth away a Relation or a Friend could never overthrow me, if I ſtood upon my own Bottom, if I were not guilty of one of the greateſt weakneſſes, of placing my Happineſs in any thing out of my own Power, and ſo making my ſelf dependent upon another man's fancy or fortune. Finally Death it ſelf muſt derive its terrors from the mournful Solemnities we dreſs it in, from the darkneſs and horrours of our deluded Imaginations; or elſe it would prove but a contemptible Bugbear, a very inconſiderable Evil, or none *at All*. Thus 'tis Evident, that if we diſtinguiſh Evils into Natural and Moral, we ſhall have little reaſon to think the Influence of Evil ſo Malignant and Deadly, ſince 'tis in our own Power to avoid moral Evils, and natural ones ſtrike but half way, they wound not the Soul that is arm'd and guarded with Reaſon and Religion. But now,

If with the Stoics we ſhould admit of no other ſort of Evil but what is Moral, if we ſhould allow the name of Good to nothing but Vertue, or of Evil to nothing but Vice, then we muſt look upon Temporal and External Misfortunes as Inconveniences and Diſadvantages only, they may make us leſs Happy, but they cannot make us miſerable; And truly if we ſhould here ſuppoſe or take for granted that there were another life, or that the pleaſure of Vertue triumphing over Calamities and Afflictions were conſiderably great, this opinion cannot imply ſo great an Abſurdity as ſome would faſten upon it; or be a mere λογομαχία or Idle Contention of words, ſince I cannot tell, with what Conſonancy to Truth, or Propriety of Speech we can call thoſe troubles or hardſhips Evils which directly tend to procure for us an infinite Good, a Pleaſure which doth abundantly outweigh our Sufferings. I 'think 'tis now ſufficiently Evident that natural Evils are not of that mighty Efficacy & deadly Venomous quality that it ſhould

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be thought that a little Evil doth more effectually contribute to our Miſery than a great deal of Good can to our Happineſs: 'tis apparent how ſlight the Impreſſions are which they *ought* to make upon us. It will now be time to conſider what impreſſions they do generally make upon us, what their real Effect commonly is, how men generally are mov'd and affected by them. 'Tis true there are ſome that mix Heaven and Earth upon every ſlight occaſion, that will receive Good but no Evil at the hand of God, moſt inſenſible of Bleſſing, but extremely tender and ſenſible of any Evil; but this ſpeaks not the Nature of Evil, but of the Man; it ſpeaks him ingrateful, but not the Evil intolerable. Nor is humane Nature to be meaſur'd by this whining querulous humour of a few, but by the ſenſe and temper of the Generality; amongſt whom 'tis eaſie to obſerve, how Inſtinct teaches us to elude the ſtroak and force of Evil, Nature opens its Arms and enlarges it ſelf to receive good, and all the Powers of the mind greedily ſtrive to ſhare

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in it, but it contracts and ſhrinks, retires and ſtands upon its Defence at the Approach of Evil, 'tis apt to flatter it ſelf, and apt to hope, apt to leſſen Evil, and magnifie Good, apt to put off the thoughts of approaching trouble, and to anticipate its Pleaſures; 'tis full of great Deſigns and gaudy Projects, and eaſily prone to delight, and content it ſelf with thin, airy, and imaginary Schemes of Good; this and much more is Evident in a Thouſand daily inſtances of humane life, by which 'tis plain Nature in the Contrivance of Man kindly deſigned to fit and diſpoſe him for Happineſs by giving him ſuch Inclinations as might ſerve to leſſen the Evil, to increaſe the Good, to ſupply the Defects of this mortal and imperfect ſtate. Is it not manifeſt that whereas Evil looks leſs to us, Good looks bigger at a Diſtance, we are willing to help Fortune, and call in the Aids of fancy to adorn and enrich her gifts; nor is it eaſie to defeat Man of this Humour, he Dreams of a bottomleſs Abyſs in every Good, in every Pleaſure, and notwithſtanding the dai-

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ly Confutations of Experience, he ſtill deſires to repeat his Enjoyments o're again, as if he did ſtill hope to find ſome new untaſted ſweet, ſome pleaſure undiſcover'd untry'd before: how apt are we to flatter our ſelves, and willing to be flatter'd, every Man repreſents himſelf and ſtate under the faireſt Idea that he can poſſibly frame of it, and turns away his Eye and Thought from every thing that may offend him: Beauty, Strength, Health, Underſtanding, Wiſdom, Reputation, Attendants, Power, Wealth, and whatever future Good he can form thô but a ſlender Pretenſion to, make up the gay Idea, nay, and even long life and undiſturb'd ſecurity are there drawn as two Pillars to ſupport the Building; the Daring but kind Confidence of Man that makes himſelf the Maſter of Fate and Fortune! if you ſhould mark this Tablet with e're ſo prying and curious an Eye, you would not be able to diſcover either Deformity or Folly, or Diſhonour, or Poverty, or Diſeaſe or Death: for theſe Man kind to himſelf baniſhes far from his Thoughts,

Thoughts, and ſuffers not to enter into the Portraicture of himſelf: And hence 'tis that moſt Men never diſturb life with the Apprehenſion of its End, and never feel Death till they are dying; Kind Inſtinct ſhewing us an eaſier way to leſſen this Evil, than the Reaſon of moſt Philoſophers ever could, making our ſuffering extreamly ſhort, and even then too almoſt in the midſt of Death men fondly Dream of and hope for life, and can ſcarcely ſuffer their hope to expire in the laſt gaſp: Nay, ſo willing to be deluded, ſo eaſie to be impos'd upon are Men, that they make even thoſe things which are the Trophies of Death, and the Monuments of Man's Frailty and Vanity, miniſter to them ſome ſlight Comforts at leaſt againſt Mortality; they divert and entertain themſelves with the Mourning and Pomp of their Obſequies, with Blacks and Tombs, with the dying Eccho's of ſurviving Reputation, and with the grandure and felicity of their Poſterity; as if they did fondly perſwade themſelves that they ſhould be concern'd in all theſe things,

that

that ſomething beyond the Grave did relate to them, and that they did not utterly periſh and dye. And if this kind as well as obſtinate hope do in ſome meaſure break the force of the greateſt Evil that is Death; we cannot but expect that it ſhould be highly ſerviceable to Man in moving him to deſpiſe, or enabling him to vanquiſh leſs Evils; hence 'tis that no examples of the Inconſtancy or Change of fortune, of the incertainty of Royal or Popular favour, no Inſtances of ſlighted Service, deluded Hope, ſudden Death, or any thing of this kind are ſufficient to diſcourage the attempts, the purſuits of Mankind after worldly things, we boldly adventure upon thoſe Seas which we ſee ſcatter'd o're with numerous Wrecks, and confidently purſue thoſe Paths where we every moment meet with the ominous Ruines of diſappointed hope, and fruitleſs drudgery, and baffled preſumption. Thus it is, I determin'd not that thus it ought to be, I examin'd not what is here the office of Philoſophy or the work of Vertue, I have only barely repreſented the

the humour and inclination of Man, only that you may ſee that he is not ſuch a defenceleſs ſhiftleſs Creature, but that his Reaſon dares confront and can vanquiſh Evils in open Battle, and by downright force, and inſtinct teaches him how to elude 'em by various and thoſe (if well conducted) uſeful and innocent Arts. After all it doth therefore manifeſtly appear that as the Number of Evils is not greater than that of Goods, ſo neither is the Vigour and Energy of the one ſo much greater than that of the other, that a little Evil ſhould out-weigh a great deal of Good, that a little Evil ſhould contribute more to a man's Miſery, than a great deal of Good to his Happineſs. There remains nothing further to be examin'd, but

*3. Man's Good or Evil depends upon himſelf.*

Thirdly, That Fancy which aſcribes Man's portion of Good and Evil, to time or chance, &c. not Man's Vertue or Induſtry, to any thing but to himſelf; and he that can with Confidence affirm this, may with as good grace aſſert, that there is neither Wiſdom nor Folly in the World; for if there be,

be, this Imagination muſt ſoon vaniſh, ſince Wiſdom is nothing elſe but the choice of true Good and rejection of Evil, the purſuit of our true Happineſs by all the moſt rational and probable means, and a declining and flying from all thoſe things that are repugnant to it. And thô ſucceſs and good fortune do not always attend Wiſdom and Vertue, yet you ſhall never perſwade any but Madmen or Fools that 'tis in vain to be Vertuous, or irrational to be Wiſe. *Solomon* has indeed obſerv'd as an inſtance or proof of the vanity of all things, *That the Race is not to the ſwift, nor the Battle to the ſtrong, neither yet Bread to the Wiſe, nor yet Riches to men of Underſtanding, nor yet favour to men of Skill*: I exempt not the wiſe from ſubjection to Time and Chance, which is all that *Solomon* complains of here; but notwithſtanding I muſt ever think with him, that *Wiſdom excels folly as much as light doth darkneſs*; not only becauſe chearful, delightful to it ſelf, but alſo becauſe 'tis the Happieſt guide of humane Life, bleſt generally with ſucceſs

Eccleſ. 9.

Eccleſ. 2.

ceſs as well as Rich in intrinſick Good, and in ſome meaſure ſelf-ſufficient: Nor do's our Engliſh Proverb *Fools have the fortune*, imply any more than that the Proſperity of Fools is to be imputed to their Fortune, that of Wiſe men to their Merit, that ſucceſs do's commonly wait upon Vertue and Wiſdom, and nothing but an extraordinary Chance can turn it upon the Fool or Sinner; thô all this while I underſtand Succeſs in things neceſſary not ſuperfluous, for I cannot ſee how it can be any diſparagement to Providence to turn that Plenty another way, which would not like ſoft diſtilling Rains and Dew cheriſh, refreſh, and increaſe the tender Plants, Wiſdom and Vertue, but like a Flood waſh away the Earth from their Roots, and either utterly extirpate 'em, or leave 'em oppreſs'd and buried in Rubbiſh: If this were not true, if the Experience as well as Reaſon of Mankind did not confirm it, Men would not ſerve Apprentiſhips to Trades, Men would not ſtudy Arts or Sciences, Men would not ſtrive with toil and hazard to make their Point,

Point, but lazily and ſecurely ſtay till Fortune rain its Golden Showers into their Laps.

By a Recapitulation of all that has been hitherto diſcours'd, it may eaſily appear how far I have advanc'd in the proof of that Aſſertion I undertook to make Good, namely, that Happineſs may be attain'd in this World; I have ſhew'd that Religion doth no way obſtruct our preſent Happineſs, that Duty of Mortification which it enjoyns, not forbidding us to allow the World a proper place in our Eſteem, but to overvalue it, but to doat upon it; not forbidding us the Enjoyment, but abuſe of the things of this World. No man therefore will ever be able to prove that this Doctrine is injurious to our Happineſs, till he be able to convince us that 'tis indiſpenſibly neceſſary to our Happineſs to doat upon theſe Temporal things, and to be as irrational and intemperate in our Enjoyment of 'em as our Paſſion for 'em: which he can never go about to do, without contradicting not only reveal'd Truth, but alſo the Univerſal Reaſon and Ex-

perience of Mankind. I have in the next place shew'd, that some are happier than others, or at least less miserable, That this Distinction of the Condition or state of Men is to be imputed to the Vertues of some, and the Vices of others. I have shew'd in the last place that the World abounds with good things, that there is no Appetite nor Capacity of Man that may not find Objects proper and agreeable, and such as in a great measure may delight and satisfie; and that Man is endow'd with such a variety of faculties, and senses, that there is scarce any thing in all the variety of Beings the World contains, which he is not capable of enjoying. From whence it clearly follows, That Man may be happy in the Enjoyment of these good things, unless the Evil of life sour and imbitter the Good, or the attainment of the Good be out of the Power of Man, to remove all suspicion of both which, I discours'd something thô briefly of the Nature of Evil, and the Nature of Man, evincing plainly the Impotence and Feebleness of the one, and the Strength

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and Preparations of the other; and for the Cloſe of all, I have endeavour'd to make it manifeſt that Good and Evil are not ſo much the Reſult of Time or Chance, &c. as the Neceſſary Conſequence of Wiſdom and Folly. From all which the Concluſion that naturally ariſes is this; That if Man be miſerable 'tis his own fault, or which is all one, a Man may be happy if he will, which was the thing to be prov'd. Let us try now by a Cloſe Application of all that has been ſaid to the Wants and Neceſſities of Mankind, what the Evidence, what the Conviction, what the real uſe and force of this Diſcourſe is. I am unhappy, I am miſerable; whoe're thou art that ſay'ſt ſo, thou muſt needs mean one of theſe two things. Thou do'ſt enjoy no good or art oppreſt with Evil: If the latter, I demand what Evil? ſpeak out; ſpeak plainly. There are three ſorts of Evils; the Evils of the Mind, the Evils of the Body, the Evils of Fortune. Which of thoſe art thou oppreſt by? The Evils of the Mind? Theſe are either ſinful Paſſions, or what is the Effect of them,

guilty Fears: Nothing can compel thee to be wicked, ceaſe to be wicked, and thou wilt ceaſe to fear. The Evils of the Body? they are generally the Effect of unruly Paſſions and a diſorderly Life; and where they are not, the Pleaſures of the Mind will outweigh the Pains of the Body. The Evils of Fortune? 'tis in thy Power, whether theſe ſhall be really Evils, or no; they befall thy Poſſeſſions not thee; the fooliſh and vicious Mind only ſuffers in theſe, the Wiſe and Vertuous one is much above them; 'tis therefore thy own fault if thou be oppreſſed with Evil. But wilt thou ſay the former? I enjoy no Good, no ſatisfactory Good. why? is there no Good to be enjoy'd? I have already prov'd the contrary; and if I had not, how eaſie were it here to do it? there's Truth to entertain thy Underſtanding; Moral Perfections to delight thy Will; Variety of Objects to treat thy ſenſes, the Excellencies of the viſible and inviſible World to be enjoy'd by thee: why then do'ſt thou defer to live? why do'ſt thou not begin to enjoy? here

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'tis Evident that thou muſt be forc't to ſay one of theſe Two things, either That thou art not capable of Enjoying theſe Bleſſings, or that they are out of thy Reach, out of thy Power: to ſay thou art not capable of 'em is to re-renounce the faculties of thy Soul and the ſenſes of thy Body; to ſay they are out of thy Reach, is in Effect to ſay that Vertue and Vice, Wiſdom and Folly are all one; or which is every jot as abſur'd, that thou art wicked and ſottiſh, and can'ſt not help it. And this is that indeed which in Effect, all do ſay that accuſe Fortune, or Fate, or Nature, or any thing but themſelves as the Cauſes of their Miſery: and yet as abſur'd as this is, it muſt be now examin'd, becauſe the Minds of Men are perverted and diſcourag'd by ſuch Notions, I will proceed therefore to the Third thing propos'd. That is,

## SECT. III.

*To answer the Objections against the Attainment of Happiness.*

THose who deny the Possibility of attaining Happiness in this Life, are of two sorts; First, such who argue from Experience and Observation (without troubling themselves to assign any Reason or Cause of what they affirm) No man ever has been Happy; and therefore No man can: This has in part been already answer'd, and shall more fully in the close of this Chapter. Secondly, Such who assign a Cause or Reason, why some are miserable and cannot possibly be otherwise. The Number of these, if men would talk Coherently, if they would be firm and steady to their Principles, would be very small: for as the Belief of a God, the Creator and Governor of the World, destroys Fate; so doth the Denial of a God destroy the Liberty of the Mind of Man, and render all its motion as Determinate and

and Neceſſary, as that of Fire, or Air, or any inanimate Body whatever: and therefore (as it were fit) the Atheiſt only ſhould oppoſe this Propoſition, and he who has excluded God out of the World, ſhould exclude Happineſs too: for if whatever be not voluntary (I ſpeak of Humane Miſery) be neceſſary and unavoidabe, and whatever be ſo, be Fatal, as needs it muſt, for I am not able to diſtinguiſh between a fatal Event, and one that is Neceſſary and unavoidable: Then it naturally follows, that the Atheiſt only ſhould deny the poſſibility of attaining Happineſs, as he who only aſſerts Fate. But the Reaſonings of many men are wild and inconſiſtent, and therefore ſome who widely differ in their Principles, do yet conclude and center in one common Errour; and thus it happens here, Theiſts as well as Atheiſts endeavouring to introduce Fate into the World, and conſequently to make the miſery of ſuch as are miſerable involuntary, fatal, and unavoidable: 'tis true, he that affirms ſome men to be unavoidably miſerable, doth not

deny, that others may be Happy; but he doth in Effect diſcourage all who are not already Happy, from endeavouring to be ſo: and therefore muſt here be oppos'd by me.

Now 'tis true that I might this way with one ſtroke cut off all Objections at once; for he that baffles the Opinion of Fate, leaves every man in a Capacity of Happineſs, and proves his miſery voluntary; for that Choice which Man makes, being not neceſſarily or fatally determin'd to it, is a voluntary one; and this were a very eaſie Task. For firſt, I do not know, that there were ever any in the World (a few only excepted) ſo addicted to maintain an Univerſal Fate, as that they did not exempt the Mind of Man from its Soveraignty and Dominion (of which anon) and in the ſecond place, if any at this Day do not, as a Philoſopher once prov'd, motion by walking; ſo were it as eaſie and ready a way to prove the Liberty of Mankind by ſome free Choice or other: But when one is oblig'd to anſwer Objections, that Method muſt be taken,

ken, not which the Nature of things invites to, but the manner of Mens propoſing their Opinions compels to; Therefore becauſe men do generally impute their Miſery to either God, Fortune, Fate, or their own Incapacity of Happineſs; I will ſpeak diſtinctly to each of theſe. And,

Firſt, I'le endeavour to ſhew that God is not the Cauſe of any man's Miſery, to which purpoſe I muſt aſſert and vindicate the infinite Goodneſs of God, and his love of Mankind: If what *Epictetus* ſaid with reſpect to many Gods had been ſpoke, with reſpect to one, nothing had ever been ſaid with more exact truth, or a better pois'd judgment, τὸ περὶ τὰς Θεὰς εὐσεβείας, ἴσθι ὅτι τὸ κυριώτατον ἐκεῖνο ἔστιν, ὀρθὰς ὑπολήψεις περὶ αὐτῶν ἔχειν. The firſt and Chief thing in Religion is to have Rational and true Notions of God, it being otherwiſe impoſſible that Religion ſhould ſerve the great Intereſt of God's Glory, and Man's Happineſs: for falſe and unworthy Notions of him muſt needs bereave God of the Honour and Worſhip due to him from

*Epicteti. Enchirid.* c. 37.

from his Creatures, by alienating the Minds of Men from him, and betraying 'em into Superſtition, Idolatry or Atheiſm: and thus that Religion which was' deſign'd to glorifie God by the manifeſtation and acknowledgment of his Divine Excellencies and Perfections, and to advance Man into a ſtate of Bleſſedneſs, by influencing his life, and filling his Mind with Security and Chearfulneſs, ſhall be perverted to Ends directly contrary, and prove inſtrumental to Diſhonour God and render Man miſerable. The truth of this has been too too Evident in thoſe viſible Effects the Ignorance, or miſrepreſentation of the Divine Nature produc't amongſt the Gentils, the want of conceiving aright his Omnipotence and Immenſity, &c. joyn'd with the numerous Neceſſities of Mankind did bring forth, or at leaſt confirm Polytheiſm; Groundleſs Apprehenſions of Cruelty in God brought forth Superſtition, and the Abſurdities of Polytheiſm and Superſtition gave Being to Atheiſm: and at this Day there are many miſchiefs which I muſt impute either

either to falſe Notions of God, or want of juſt Conſideration of the true Ones, or at leaſt to not arguing clearly and truly from 'em. For from one of theſe Reaſons it proceeds, that the Worſhip of ſome Men is ſo ſlight, empty and trifling; the Religion of others ſo melancholy and uncomfortable, and truly Superſtitious; and I am afraid there is too much of Atheiſtical looſneſs, ſenſual, carnal Preſumption and wretchleſs Deſpair, and many other Evils owing to the ſame Cauſe: had Men worthy Notions of God, how were it poſſible they ſhould ever fancy, that God would accept the Sincerity and Devotion of a Communicant ſitting, but not kneeling? after Supper, but not in the Morning? that the whiteneſs of the Garment would pollute and unhallow the Spiritual Sacrifice of Prayer and Praiſes? and ſuch like. Would not a right Notion of God eaſily convince ſuch a weak and ſcrupulous trifler, That God were not to be pleas'd but by ſincere and ſubſtantial Holineſs and Righteouſneſs, nor to be diſpleas'd but by voluntary wicked-

wickedneſs? All things elſe weighing nothing in the Ballance of the Sanctuary, and not deſerving the Notice or Regard of the Governour of the World: and thô ſuch a one ſhould ſuppoſe his ſcruples warranted by Divine Command, and conſequently becauſe the Soveraignty of God renders all his Commandments indiſputably Authoritative and binding, he ſhould therefore think himſelf as indiſpenſibly oblig'd to reject theſe things, as to ſhun a Sin; yet even here a right Underſtanding of the Divine Nature, would ſoon inſtruct him how to diſtinguiſh the Divine Commands, and teach him that thoſe which did enjoyn Holineſs and Righteouſneſs were the ſtanding and Fundamental Laws of the Divine Government; that thoſe which did enjoyn Duties ſubſervient to that End were of an Inferiour Nature, and did bind in proportion to their Neceſſity and Tendency; that ſuch as did enjoyn or forbid things of a more remote and diſtant Nature, Circumſtantial, Ritual, &c. were merely Poſitive and Arbitrary, Temporary and mutable, and

and the interpoſing Neceſſity of Superiour Duties is at any time ſufficient to ſuperſede their Obligation. To proceed to other Effects of miſconceptions of the Divine Nature, how were it poſſible that any one who rightly underſtood the unſpeakable goodneſs of God ſhould, after he had done all he could, be tormented with doubtful Fears and Jealouſies concerning his ſtate, nay ſometimes with a melancholy dread of God, as if he were a hard Maſter and impoſſible to be pleas'd? or how could ſuch a perſwaſion as this, That one were Damn'd from Eternity, and that neither Prayers, nor Tears, nor Induſtry could ever reverſe the fatal Sentence, find any Entertainment in that Man who were poſſeſſed with a true ſenſe and firm belief of the boundleſs love which God has for all his Rational Creatures?

It is evident therefore of what Importance 'tis to propagate and ſettle in the Minds of Men a right Underſtanding of the Divine Nature; and of all the Attributes of God, there are none that have a more immediate and powerful

erful Influence either upon the Conduct of Man's Life, or the Comfort of his Mind, than these two, his Holiness and Goodness: These make us willing and desirous to believe that there is a God, these make us love him and depend upon him, as one from whom we may rationably expect all that is Good, *He that comes to God* (saith St. *Paul*) *must believe that he is, and that he is a Rewarder of all those that diligently seek him.* These words do not only assert the Being of a God, but also his Holiness and Goodness, both which may be clearly infer'd from three Propositions couch'd in those words of the Apostle, *that he is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek him:* First, That all men may seek God diligently if they will; Secondly, That it is the desire of God that they should do so; and Thirdly, That God will reward all that do so: On these Principles is Religion founded, on these Principles the Honour of God, and the Happiness of Man must be establish't: I will therefore discourse here, First, of the Goodness; and Secondly, of

Ὡς ὄντων, καὶ τοῖς ἐκζητοῦσι τὸν θεὸν καλῶς καὶ δικαίως, Epict.

of the Holineſs of God, which I diſtinguiſh from one another only for Methods ſake.

Cruelty was the property of the Gentil Gods, not of the true God, Humane Blood in which the *Canaanites*, *Carthaginians*, and others Sacrific'd, was an Oblation fit for *Baal*, *Moloch*, &c. that is, for Devils not for God: Innate Wrath and Cruelty is inconſiſtent with a Happy Nature or a Happy ſtate, for theſe are furious and tormenting Paſſions: Nor can we imagin that ſuch a Being ſhould make its Reſidence in Heaven, a place of Peace and Love, or be delighted with Hallelujah's and Adorations of Angels; This were no Pleaſure, no Muſick to a Being in whom Wrath and Cruelty were Predominant. Nor were thoſe Good, thoſe Holy, thoſe Charitable Spirits fit Attendance, fit Miniſters for ſuch a Being; No, could we ſuppoſe (as ſome Hereticks once fancy'd) that there were two firſt Principles, A good and bad one? could we ſuppoſe there were an Evil God? one in whom Cruelty, and Wrath were his beloved

*Of the Goodneſs of God.*

beloved Attributes? We must necessarily conclude that he would make Hell his Court, that his Guards and Courtiers would be Fiends and Furies, and that the shrieks and torments of wretched Creatures would be the Pleasure, the Harmony he delighted in; this were a God fit for a *Hobbist*, one who can discern no difference between Vertue and Vice, between Good and Evil, between Love or Charity and Devilishness. And yet, I cannot in Charity, but retract and condemn this thought; for Oh! no other God is fit for him, but he whom he denieth! no other God is fit for such a Wretch but the God of Love and Mercy! to whom I recommend him and proceed. All who believe a God, must believe him a most perfect Being, for whence else should the scatter'd Perfections of his Creatures have Beginning? But if any man will say, that there is no Difference between Perfections and Imperfections, I would know, why doth he reverence Wisdom more than Folly? or why he doats on Beauty rather than Deformity? or if he tell me, that he acknow-

acknowledges a Diſtinction between Natural, but none between Moral Perfections or Imperfections; not to urge that the Vertues of the *Will* are as truly Natural as thoſe of the Underſtanding, the Capacities of and Aptitudes to each being born with us, not the habits, and the one being as agreeable to the Nature and Conſonant to the Intereſt of Man as the other; I will ask him, why he do's not love the froward and peeviſh as well as the Sweet and Gentle? the Cruel and Implacable, as well as the Kind and Charitable? the Proud and Wilful as well as the Humble and Modeſt? and whatever anſwer he gives me, will abundantly ſerve to refute his fancy; If then there be Natural and Moral Perfections, and God be the moſt perfect Being, we muſt needs aſcribe to him thoſe Properties which we look upon as Perfections in his Rational Creatures, and that in ſuch degrees as exempt him from all Imperfection; if therefore Goodneſs, Charity, Clemency be univerſally acknowledg'd for Perfections, we muſt neceſſarily ſuppoſe

them in God in the most perfect Degree: Nor let any one think it absurd that the same should be the Vertues of God and Man, of a finite and an infinite Being, for we suppose them in God in a manner suitable to His Majesty, and in Man in a manner suitable to his meanness; and unless we acknowledge this, there cannot possibly be any settled and certain Reason for our Love, or Hope, or Dependence, the great parts of Divine Worship. That therefore God is Good and Merciful, a lover of Mankind, was ever the constant and unanimous sense of the wise and good part of Mankind. Poets indeed and Painters degenerous, dastardly, cruel and vicious Men did represent the Deity under hideous Shapes and in such Colours, as their guilty Fears or Vices furnish't 'em with, but Philosophers, as *Plutarch* observes, were always wont to represent him most amiable and lovely, always tempering his Majesty with Love and Goodness, his Power and Justice, with Tenderness, Mercy and Compassion towards Mankind. Hence it was that they

Ἀποδειχνύντων τὸν Θεὸν σεμνότητα μετὰ χρηστότητος καὶ μεγαλοπρεπείας μετὰ φιλανθρωπίας, Plutarch *De Superstitione.*

they were wont to attribute all thoſe things that were extreamly uſeful and beneficial, to God as the Author of 'em, as Government, Laws, Arts and Sciences, &c. they look't upon their Gods as the Guides and Guardians of Men, and aſcrib'd to 'em whatever they atchiev'd bravely and Happily in life: But on the other hand, frowardneſs, wrath and cruelty did ever ſeem ſo ugly and deteſtable to Wiſe and Vertuous men, that they not only deſpis'd but abhorr'd as well the wickedneſs as folly of Superſtition, which repreſented God, or rather diſhonour'd him under ſuch Characters: οἳ δὲ δοξάζουσι φοβερὸν τὸ εὐμενὲς, καὶ Τυραννικὸν τὸ πατρικὸν, καὶ βλαβερὸν τὸ κηδεμονικὸν, καὶ τὸ ἀμικτὸν ἄγριον καὶ θηριώδες. And this Notion of the Deity which repreſented that Being which was kind and benign, as terrible and dreadful; which was gracious and fatherly, as Tyrannical; which was friendly and careful of us, as injurious and hurtful; which was mild and gentle as fierce and ſavage; gave ſuch a diſtaſt and diſguſt to all ingenious Tempers, that they thought Ibid.

Atheiſm a much more Excuſable Impiety than Superſtition; Hence is that of *Plutarch* (ſo generally prais'd by all Writers) ἔγωγ' ἐν ἂν ἐθέλοιμι μᾶλλον τῶν ἀνθρώπων λέγειν περὶ ἐμοῦ, μήτε γεγονέναι τὸ παράπαν, μηδὲ εἶναι Πλούταρχον ἢ λέγειν, ὅτι Πλούταρχος ἔστιν ἄνθρωπος ἀβέβαιος, εὐμετάβολος, χερὴς πρὸς ὀργὴν, ἐπὶ τοῖς τυχοῦσι μικρολυπος. Ibid. I had rather men ſhould ſay of me, there neither was, nor is ſuch a one as *Plutarch*, than that they ſhou'd ſay, that he was a man of a fickle, unconſtant, froward, revengeful and implacable temper. Let us not therefore entertain ſuch an Idea of God, as Humane Nature would recoil from, and ſtart back pale and ſcared at the ſight: Let us not faſten thoſe Characters upon God, which a good-temper'd man, if charg'd with 'em would look upon, as the fouleſt Reproaches and moſt injurious Accuſations; Eſpecially ſince a Defect is not only more Conſpicuous, but more Reproachful, where there ſhould be nothing but Perfection: And Peeviſhneſs and Cruelty are infinitely more miſchievous in an Almighty than

Impo-

Impotent Being: I might ſhun *Polycrates*, *Dionyſius*, *Periander*, &c. but how ſhould I ſhun God? I might leave *Samos*, *Sicily*, or *Corinth*, and where Clemency and Juſtice made their Abode, I might make mine: But whither ſhould I go, what place ſhould be my Refuge, if the Governour of the World were but an Almighty Tyrant? Thus 'tis manifeſt ſuch kind of Repreſentations of God tend not to enamour Man of God, but to alienate and eſtrange him: they tend not to advance Religion but Superſtition; they tend to make Men dread God, but not love him; they are therefore to be baniſh't out of the World, and God is to be repreſented ſuch as our Dear Lord, who lay in the Boſom of his Father has reveal'd him, *A God of Hope*, *a God of Love*, *a God who is a Rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him.* This is the Dictate of Nature, This is the Dictate of the Spirit, *God is Love.* Let it not be thought an abſurd or barren Tautology, thô I ſhould recite this one Text a Thouſand times oft'ner than I do: for no Tongue can expreſs the Di-

vine Nature ſo much to the life, as his who was inſpir'd by the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Love.

Nor let God's dealings with the Gentil World before the Revelation of Chriſtianity be alledg'd as an Objection againſt the Goodneſs of God, and his Tenderneſs and Compaſſion for Mankind; 'tis true, *God in times paſt ſuffer'd all Nations to walk in their own ways; and the times of this Ignorance he winked at:* he publiſhed no reveal'd Law to the Gentiles from Heaven, he deputed no Prophets to 'em, as to his People the *Jews*, with a Commiſſion to reſtore by Signs and Miracles, that Natural Religion conformably to which they were to Worſhip God: which is the Import of thoſe places of St. *Paul*; and yet 'tis true that the Belief of the Living and true God, and the natural Law of Good and Evil was ſtrangely effac'd and obliterated amongſt the Gentils: but notwithſtanding all this, it muſt be remembred too; 1. That *God left not himſelf without a witneſs* in any age of Gentiliſm: the Heathen were never deſtitute of ſo much Light

Act. 14. and 17.

as

as might have conducted 'em to God, and that Happineſs he deſign'd 'em: for beſides the Traditions tranſmitted from *Noah* to Poſterity, the Book of Nature and Providence was ever open to 'em, and this did in moſt legible Characters aſſert the Being of one Supreme God, and inſtructed 'em in the Knowledge of his Power and Goodneſs; Thus St. *Paul*, *Nevertheleſs he left not himſelf without witneſs, in that he did good, and gave us Rain from Heaven, and fruitful Seaſons, filling our hearts with Food and Gladneſs.* Acts 14.

Nor was this Teſtimony ſo unſucceſsful, but that in all Ages there were ſome Excellent men who did aſcribe the Original & Government of the World to God, and gave ſuch an account of his Holineſs and Goodneſs as was ſufficient to have founded a Rational and Excellent Worſhip upon: theſe were ſo many Lights ſhining in dark

*Sunt autem alii Philoſophi & hi quidem magni atq; nobiles, qui Deorum mente atq; ratione omnem mundum adminiſtrari & regi cenſeant, neq; verò id ſolum, ſed etiam ab iiſdem vitæ hominum conſuli & Provideri: Nam & fruges & reliqua quæ terra pariat, & tempeſtates, ac tem porum Varietates, cœliq; mutationes, quibus omnia, quæ terra gignat, maturata pubeſcant, à Diis Immortalibus tribui generi humano putant.* Cic. l. 1. De Natura Deorum.

places, as ſo many Juſtifications of Divine Providence, and Reproaches of Man's wilful Stupidity.

2. 'Tis not in the leaſt to be doubted, but that the Nature of their Duty and conſequently the Condition of their Happineſs was Proportion'd and Conform'd to thoſe Manifeſtations which God made 'em, to thoſe Obligations which he laid before 'em, and to that Strength and Aſſiſtance which he Vouchſafed 'em: for God is not a hard Maſter, he will not make good the Accuſation of the wicked Servant; Luk. 19. *he will not take up what he laid not down, nor reap what he did not ſow.* In a word, if God do at the laſt Day deal with Men according to thoſe ſeveral Oeconomies of his Providence which they were under, and if he has afforded all Nations means proportionable to thoſe Duties he requir'd of them, and to thoſe Degrees of Happineſs to which he deſign'd them, then he was always the God of the Gentiles as well as once of the *Jews*, or now of the Chriſtians, and there is no one part in the whole ſeries of Providence which can

give

give us any Colour to call into queſtion the Care or Goodneſs of God towards Mankind. This I think is enough to remove this Objection as it lay in my way: if my Deſign did not haſten me on, and I did not judge this Satisfactory, I could eaſily make appear God's Goodneſs to the Gentils, by preſenting the Reader with a Scheme of the Religion of the *Pythagoreans*, *Platonics*, and *Stoics*; by examining the Difference of the Idolatry of the Wiſe and Vertuous part of the Gentil World, and that of the ſottiſh and vicious part of it; by conſidering the Aſſiſtances that God vouchſafed 'em, and giving an Account whence it came to paſs that the Worſhip of one true God by Holineſs and Vertue, was ſo far ſtifled and oppreſs'd in the Gentil World: But I have ſaid enough to Vindicate the Goodneſs of God; and the ſtate of Gentils and Infidels do's not ſo nearly concern my preſent Enquiry, as to deſerve ſo exact a Diſcuſſion.

The Barrenneſs of ſome Countries, the Servitude and Poverty of ſome People

ple is a much ſlighter Objection; for till it can appear, that Poverty is an Enemy to Vertue, or that Wealth which is the Inſtrument of Luxury, and the Nurſe of Sloth and Wantonneſs, is abſolutely neceſſary to Man's Happineſs, it will weigh but very little againſt ſo many Demonſtrations of Divine Love, that he has not heap'd upon all Nations ſo many Temporal Bleſſings as might put 'em into a Capacity of being Lazy, Wanton and Inſolent.

Now give me leave to make a ſtand, and like a Traveller when he has gain'd an Aſcent, look back upon the way I have gone, and ſee how much of my Journey I have diſpatch't: My Undertaking was to demonſtrate the Love of God to Mankind; thus far I have advanc'd towards this with undeniable Evidence; I have proved, That Peeviſhneſs, Malignity and Cruelty cannot belong to God, becauſe this were inconſiſtent with the Perfection of his Nature, or the Happineſs of his State: nor can it rationally be ſuppos'd, that the ſame Properties ſhould belong to

thoſe

thoſe Evil Spirits which for a long time deluded the World, and that God who has done ſo much to deſtroy that Kingdom of Darkneſs, and reſcuing Man, to reſtore him to a Capacity of Happineſs and Glory: how could it be, that God ſhould have done ſo much, as it is apparent he has, in the Contexture of our Nature, and the Contrivance of our ſtate, to make us in Love with Goodneſs, and irreconcileably Enemies to Tyranny, Cruelty, Arbitrary Revenge, &c. if he himſelf were paſſionate, furious, and Arbitrary in his Cruelties? Nay, I have advanc'd further, and have prov'd, *Secondly*, That boundleſs Love and Goodneſs are the unqueſtionable Attributes of God, for the very ſame Arguments which exclude all manner of Imperfections and Evils from the Deity, do neceſſarily aſſert to it all manner of Perfection and Good: Nor doth the unconceivable Majeſty and Eminence of the Divine Nature only, but alſo the Indigence and Weakneſs of Humane Nature require this; ſince without it, he could not be the Object of our Love or Dependence,

pendence, nor consequently our Wor-
ship: Having proceeded thus far and
prov'd that Tyranny or Cruelty are
utterly repugnant to the Divine Na-
ture; and boundless Love and Good-
ness the Essential and Inseparable Pro-
perties of it; I do not think it Neces-
sary to prove that the Emanations of
this his Goodness do extend even to
Man; for thô the *Epicureans* acknow-
ledging God Perfect, did at the same
time allow him no other Imployment
than the Enjoyment of his own Perfe-
ctions; and thô *Aristotle* confin'd the
Providence of God, and consequently
the Irradiation of his Goodness within
Heaven; and thô lastly before the Cre-
ation of the World, we are uncapable
of conceiving any Subjects, about
which Divine Love could exercise it
self, and consequently can conceive of
it no otherwise than confin'd within
himself; All which seems to conclude
thus much that the Deity may be infi-
nitely good, and yet this Goodness not
extend it self to Man: All this con-
cerns not our present question, for thô
Man should not be the Object of Di-
vine

vine Goodneſs, yet if God be infinitely good, this will be enough to free Man from unreaſonable and ſuperſtitious fear of him, and to acquit God from the leaſt ſuſpicion of being the Cauſe of Humane Miſery; which is the utmoſt I was oblig'd to make good, in purſuance of the deſign of this Chapter: Beſides, they who accuſe God of their Miſery, do not ſuppoſe him unconcern'd about all things but himſelf, as *Epicurus*, nor bound and limit his Providence within the Encloſures of Heaven, but do plainly ſuppoſe all the affairs of Mankind to depend upon the firſt Contrivance of God in the Creation, or upon the Over-ruling Influences of his Providence in his preſent Government of the World: However, I am not willing to quit one Inch of the ground I have got, and therefore I cannot but acknowledge, that the World being now created, and Mankind form'd after God's Image (τοῦ γὰρ καὶ γένος ἐσμέν, *we are his Offspring*, ſaith St. *Paul* out of the Poet) unactive and unconcern'd Love ſeems to me a Contradiction, and infinite, boundleſs Goodneſs

neſs confined within Heaven cannot but ſeem as groſs a one: let it therefore remain an unſhaken truth, That God is Good, and that this Goodneſs doth exert and expreſs it ſelf towards Mankind, and we ſhall from hence gain theſe two Points.

1. That God is not the Cauſe of Man's Miſery, and what is more yet,

2. That he is moſt ready and willing to further and aſſiſt him in all his Endeavours after Happineſs.

The firſt of theſe is apparent, for if God be infinitely Good, then every thing that came out of his hands muſt in the ſtate of its Creation have been exceeding Good; the End of the Creation muſt have been ſomething extreamly kind and gracious, and the Law he preſcrib'd his Creatures for the Attainment of that End, muſt be as Good as Wiſe; this muſt have been the glorious ſtate of things, when God contrived this wonderful frame of Nature, when he erected this vaſt Work the World; and in all the continued progreſs of Divine Providence we are to expect no other acts of Government than

than what may become the moſt gracious Prince, the moſt tender Father; for the ſame Immenſe Goodneſs that once created, doth ever continue to Rule the World: Let us not therefore accuſe God but our ſelves if we be not Happy; Bleſſings indeed and Mercies, like warm Sun and fruitful Seaſons, deſcend upon us without our Importunity or Merit, but Evils and Miſchiefs come not till our Sins and Provocations have pull'd 'em down upon us: *Solon* indeed in *Herodotus* tells *Cræſus* τὸ Θεῖον θορυβῶδες καὶ φθονερὸν, That the Deity was envious and froward, and delighted to magnifie it ſelf in the Diſturbance of the ſettled Happineſs and Calm of Poor Men: But alas! 'tis our Fondneſs or our Pride, our Peeviſhneſs or our Wantonneſs, which raiſes in us theſe unworthy thoughts of God; he may indeed like a kind Parent train up a Son through a ſtrict Diſcipline to Vertue and Glory, he may throw difficulties into our way on purpoſe to reward our Conqueſt, he may like a wiſe Phyſician reſtore us to our Health by bitter Potions, and will like an Excellent

lent Governour vindicate, if need be, our wanton Contempt of Love and Mercy by Severity and Chaſtiſements, but he will never, like a Salvage Tyrant, delight in the Sufferings or Ruine of Innocent or humble Subjects: he will never preſcribe Impoſſible Laws, that he may enjoy the Pleaſure of bloody Executions; he will never make the groans of wretched People his Muſick; nor think Miſery and Death the beſt marks of his abſolute Power, or faireſt Ornaments of his Throne; No, we ſhall never need any other proof to clear the Divine Majeſty from any ſuch Imputation, than to Examine our ſelves and reflect upon our own behaviour, we ſhall ſoon find that we alone are guilty of our Ruine, and that God is utterly free from it; our exceſſive Enjoyments create the Diſeaſes of the Body, and our exceſſive Paſſion the pains and torments of the Mind, and moſt of the Changes in our Fortune derive themſelves from both; a languiſhing Body, and a languiſhing Reputation, a broken Eſtate, and a dejected Mind are the Common Effects of

of a Diſorderly and Debauch't life; and ſuch a life is the natural Effect of a Mind enſlav'd to the Body and eſtranged from God, not only by a Neglect, but by a Contempt and Defiance of all thoſe means by which a Good God deſign'd to bring him through Vertue to Glory; and then at laſt a guilty Conſcience, a diſtracted Mind, and a moſt melancholy, miſerable Death is the Conſequence and End of all: This is the Progreſs which our Voluntary Sin and Folly makes, we cannot think that a Good God can direct or Neceſſitate us to theſe Courſes; they are as repugnant to his Laws, as to our own Intereſt, and the ſame time we forfeit our Happineſs, we diſappoint his Love and Goodneſs; all the Ways and Methods of God are Kind and Gracious, and Wiſe and Rational, inanimate Bodies do not deſert thoſe Offices he has preſcrib'd 'em, Animals move regularly by thoſe Inſtincts he has implanted in them, and ſo both the one and the other do neceſſarily ſerve thoſe Excellent Ends, for which they were Created: But Man having

no Neceſſity but Liberty wove into the Conſtitution of his Nature, and having no Compulſory, but only directing Law preſcrib'd him, has perverted his own ways, abus'd his Liberty and made that his Ruine, which well-us'd, had enhanc'd his Merit and Reward; This is the Account which the Scripture gives us of Man's Miſery, it imputes it wholly to himſelf, and repreſents his Obſtinacy as ungrateful and diſpleaſing to God, as 'tis fatal to himſelf: *O Iſrael, thou haſt deſtroy'd thy ſelf: As I live, I delight not in the Death of a Sinner, turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die? O Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem, thou that killeſt the Prophets and ſtoneſt them which are ſent unto thee: how often would I have gather'd thy Children together, even as a Hen gathers her Chickens under her wings, and ye would not?* Nor is this account of things which the Scripture gives us any other than that which was generally embrac'd by the Heathens, this being not the ſenſe of any particular prepoſſeſſions or private Opinions inſtill'd by Cuſtom or Education, but of natural

Hoſ. 13.
Ezek. 38.
Math. 23.

natural Reaſon, and fairly and eaſily deduc'd from thoſe Notions of Divine Goodneſs which were univerſally entertain'd by all judicious and underſtanding Heathens: and how ſcandalous a thing were it, if that Comfortable and Heavenly Truth which the Darkneſs and Idolatry of the Superſtitious could not extinguiſh in the Pagan World, ſhould be rejected or ſuppreſs'd by Chriſtians, οἱ Θεοὶ τῶν κακῶν εἰσιν ἀναίτιοι, καὶ νόσοι, καὶ ὅσα πάσθη σώματος. ἀκολασίας ἐστὶ σπέρματα, &c. (ἐχόντας, ——Γνώσῃ δ' ἀνθρώπους ἀνθαίρετα πήματ' Τλημονας —— That is, *Jamblichus de Vitâ Pythag. l. 1.*

Not the Will of the Gods, but the Luxury and Riot of Men is the Cauſe of thoſe Evils which infeſt the Body, &c. Hence that Charitable piece of Heathen Devotion. *Idem l. 2.*

Ζεῦ πάτερ ἢ πολλῶν τὲ κακῶν παυσείας ἅπαντας, *Ibid.*
Ἢ πᾶσιν δείξαις οἵω τῷ δαίμονι χρῶνται.

O Father *Jove*, from numerous Evils free
Mankind, or ſhew 'em their Ruin's not from thee,
A Gracious and Benign Deity.

But from themſelves——

I will here add a Teſtimony of *Apuleius*, as containing the Senſe of the *Platonic* Philoſophy in this Point of God's Government of Mankind: *Omnia quæ naturaliter & propterea rectè feruntur, Providentiæ Cuſtodiâ gubernantur, nec ullius mali Cauſa Deo poterit aſcribi:* All the Motions of Providence are wiſe and regular, nor muſt any Evil be aſcrib'd to God as its Cauſe: But this is not all we gain from the Aſſurance of God's Infinite Goodneſs, that we have no Reaſon to apprehend any harm or miſchief from him, that he cannot be the Author of our Miſery. But we may confidently perſwade our ſelves on the other ſide,

*Apul. de Dogmate Platonis.*

Secondly, That he is moſt ready and willing to further and aſſiſt us in all our Endeavours after Happineſs. And now methinks, I am ſo far from queſtioning the poſſibility of attaining Happineſs, that I begin already to feel and enjoy it; I ſee the Day breaking in upon me from above; how can he chooſe but be Happy who is the Love, the Care of God! I may walk like

*Peter*

*Peter* on the Waves, and bid defiance to the Storms, I know I ſhall never ſink, whil'ſt that God upholds me, who calls me this way to him; I can now eaſily believe that my temper may be transform'd, my Corruptions may be put off, and I be made partaker of a Divine Nature; ſince the Spirit of God will dwell with me, the Light of God will always ſhine upon me, and the Power of God will always ſuccour and aid me; can I imagine as much as any Colour or Pretext, why I ſhould not now be able to attain to an Excellent ſtate of Vertue, or why this Vertue ſhould not be able to Vanquiſh all thoſe Difficulties that oppoſe my Happineſs, ſince I am aſſur'd that God will not refuſe me his Spirit if I ask it, and that his Grace will be ſufficient for me? You ſee, of what vaſt Importance this Truth is, that God will be always ready to aſſiſt every man in his Endeavours after Happineſs; and therefore thô it ſtand here as a Neceſſary and undeniable Concluſion from the foregoing Diſcourſe, thô the Perfection of the Divine Nature do amount to a lit-

tle less than a Demonstration of it; for *Beneficence to his Creatures is as necessarily included in the Notion of Perfection, as Perfection is in the Notion of a God: yet as well for my own Pleasure, as that interest which is nearly concern'd in this Truth, I will dwell a little longer on the Confirmation and Illustration of it: There are three Eminent Acts of Divine Assistance; The *First*, is such a Direction of the Events of Secular Affairs, that they may tend to our Good: The *Second* is his Assistance of us in the Attainment of Vertue; And the *Third* is, his recruiting us by fresh supplies of Strength in all our hazardous Conflicts and Extraordinary Trials: Now thô I could not give an account of the manner how God performs this kind Work of his Providence, yet ought not that to disswade me from the belief of it; because we know that our Comprehension ought not to be the Standard of Divine Perfections, nor the narrow bounds

* Εἰ γὰρ μὴ τέλειον οὐκ αὐταρκὲς, εἰ δὲ οὐκ αὐταρκὲς οὐπω τέλειον, εἰ δὲ αὐταρκὲς, μηδὲ τέλειον, πῶς ἰσχυρὸν; αὐταρκες δὲ ὂν καὶ τέλειον καὶ ἰσχυρὸν κατὰ μὲν τὴν τελειότητα. τὰ ἀγαθὰ βούλεται. κατὰ δὲ τὴν αὐτάρκειαν ἔχει. κατὰ δὲ τὴν ἰσχῦν δύναται, βουλόμενος δὲ καὶ ἔχων καὶ δυναμενος κατὰ τὶ μὴ δῷ; Max. Tyrius Disser. 22.

bounds of our Imagination be the utmoſt extent of the Almighty's Power. However 'tis not difficult ſo to explain this Aſſiſtance of God in ſuch ſort as may free it from the leaſt ſuſpicion of Implying a Contradiction: For *Firſt*, as to his Direction and Conduct of Temporal Events, how eaſie will it be for us to Conceive this poſſible to God, if we conſider, Firſt, That God can form what Impreſſions he pleaſes in the Minds of Men, and inſpire 'em with what Affections he ſhall think moſt ſerviceable to his Deſigns? for there is not the leaſt pretext or colour to imagine that the Soul is any more exempt from the Soveraignty of God than the Body: or that God cannot do that which the Great, or the Cunning, or the Eloquent, nay the Popular and Ambitious, do ſeldom fail to do, raiſe what Paſſions he pleaſes in the Mind of Man. Or if we conſider Secondly, That the Power and Efficacy of Nature is wholly in his hands, that Life or Death, Plenty or Poverty, every thing depends upon his Will; for the Winds and Seas, Earth and Air,

Fire, Hail and Vapour obey his Voice, and are all of 'em, as often as he pleaſes the Inſtruments and Executioners of his Will: he that ſtills the Ragings of the Multitude, and becalms the Paſſions of the Mighty; he at whoſe Command, new Creatures enter upon the Stage of the World, and the old leave it, what is it impoſſible for him to do? nay, what is it this Almighty Governor cannot do, without moving one ſtep out of the Common Road of his Providence, without imploying any extraordinary Inſtrument, or exerting any Act of extraordinary Power? for what Secular Intereſt can there be imagin'd whoſe Succeſs or Diſappointment depends not upon ſome or other of theſe Natural Cauſes? And yet we muſt acknowledge further, Thirdly, That the Almighty has not prefixt or ſet himſelf ſuch immutable, inalterable Laws, but that he has reſerv'd to himſelf the Prerogative of ſuſpending or over-ruling 'em when he pleaſes, I mean with reſpect to the Motions of Natural Bodies, or Revolutions of Secular Affairs; and if ſuch an Interpoſal

poſal of Divine Power cannot be conceiv'd to be other than a Miracle, I muſt confeſs, I do not look upon one Age only, but every Age an Age of Miracles; Nay, I believe ſuch as theſe wrought every Day for the Protection or Relief of thoſe who depend upon this Governor of the World; for I know not to what purpoſe I ſhould, like *Jonah* or his Mariners, call upon God in a Storm, if it were never to be laid, till it had naturally ſpent its force and fury: I know not, to what purpoſe I ſhould implore the Almighty's direction upon all my Deliberations in perplex't and intangled Affairs, if I could expect no other Light than what my Labouring Mind could give it ſelf: I know not why I ſhould addreſs my ſelf to God in the Pains and Danger of an inſupportable Diſeaſe, if the Medicines will be the ſame, and their Vertue the ſame, if the Feaver will abate, and its flames be extinguiſh't or extinguiſh life in the ſame degree and manner, if I Pray or if I do not. All theſe ways of Divine Providence are very plain and intelligible, and therefore

'tis

'tis manifeſt that we may without any abſurdity aſcribe to God ſuch a Superintendency and Direction over Humane Affairs, as may render the iſſue of 'em moſt ſerviceable to the true intereſt of thoſe that Worſhip him.

As to the ſecond Part of Divine Aſſiſtance which conſiſts in aiding us in the Attainment of Holineſs and Vertue, I do readily acknowledge as far as this is perform'd by the internal Operations of his Spirit, by the Influx of Divine Light or Heavenly Vigour, I do no more underſtand the τὸ πῶς the manner of Sanctification, than that of the Creation of the Soul; This I know, that Vertue is the Rational work of a Rational Creature, 'tis the work of Man, thô aſſiſted by God, 'tis a Rational work which implies the Knowledge of our Duty, and a Power to perform it: and therefore this I know, that this aid muſt conſiſt in the Improvement of my rational Faculties in ſome acceſſion to the Reaſon of my Underſtanding, and to the Power and Liberty of my Will; Now thô I cannot comprehend how God does this,

yet

yet how eaſily can I believe it poſſible for him to do it, ſince 'tis natural to imagine, that he who created my Underſtanding can improve it, and he who inveſted me with a Rational Liberty can confirm or enlarge it, or if you pleaſe, reſcue it from that diſeas'd and ſervile Condition, unto which it was degenerated, and reſtore it to the health and ſoundneſs of its firſt State?

The Third Act of Divine Providence does not imply a new manner, but a new degree of Aſſiſtance, and therefore contains in it no further Difficulty: this time which I have ſpent upon the illuſtration of Divine Goodneſs towards Man, will not I hope be judg'd miſ-imploy'd or loſt, if it be conſider'd, that ſuch is the Confidence, or rather ſuch is the wantonneſs of ſome Men, that they reject every thing which carries in it, I will not ſay, any ſeeming Contradiction, but any ſeeming Difficulty.

But it doth not ſo nearly concern the Happineſs of Man to be inſtructed in the manner, as to be throughly perſwaded

ſwaded of the Truth of Divine Aſſiſtance; and therefore chooſing rather to be tedious than defective in the proof of it, I will add to thoſe Arguments taken from the Nature of God, whatever force and ſtrength can be derived from the Conſideration of Divine Government, which is the Expreſſion of the Divine Nature and the Image of its Perfection viſible in its Effects; The Goſpel contains this Doctrine in almoſt every Page, and the lives of Apoſtles and Martyrs are ſo many illuſtrious Inſtances of the Divine Faithfulneſs and Love, performing thoſe Promiſes which he had made 'em by his Son. The Jewiſh Polity was a Theocracy, God did for a great while preſide over 'em immediately, and govern 'em (if I may ſo ſpeak) without a Subſtitute or Vice-roy; Repeated Miracles, repeated Prophecies, extraordinary Manifeſtations of himſelf, and extraordinary Revelations were the Illuſtrious proofs of God's affection and care for that People; ſo that it were to inſult over my Reader's Patience, or to reproach his Stupidity if I ſhould go

about

about to confirm this Truth from the Old or New Teſtament: 'tis therefore only neceſſary to Examine what the Heathen thought of the Neceſſity of this Divine Aſſiſtance, and what inſtances of it may be found amongſt them: whether the Gentiles had any Notion of the Fall and Corruption of Man is not here Neceſſary to be enquir'd, but this I am ſure, they were extreamly ſenſible of that oppoſition, which Vertue met with from the World and the Body; they were extreamly ſenſible that the Inclinations of the one, and the Affluence and Troubles of the other did naturally tend to engage 'em in Vice; and therefore thô they do ſometimes magnifie Humane Nature, yet they were not ſo forgetful of their own Infirmities, or the Condition of this Life as not to judge the Aſſiſtance of God indiſpenſably neceſſary to render them Vertuous and Happy: Hence 'tis that *Pythagoras*, *Socrates* and *Plato* were Eminent in that part of Religion which conſiſts in Prayer and Invocation: Ζωκράτης εἰς Πειραιᾶ κατήει προσευξόμενος τὲ θεῷ, καὶ τὺς *Max. Tyr. Diſſer. 30.*

τὰς ἄλλας προεῖρέπετο, ᾗ ἦν ὁ βίος Σωκράτους μεστὸς εὐχῆς. *The life of* Socrates *was a life of Prayer.* And hence it was that they did generally aſcribe their Laws to thoſe Gods from whom they received their Oracles; The *Cretanes*, *Romans*, &c. not more Confidently believing that they received their Laws from *Minos*, *Numa Pompilius*, &c. than that theſe received them from *Jove*, *Ægeria* and other Gods: and I wonder not that *Cicero* ſhould ſomewhere ſay, *Nunquam vir magnus ſine Divino afflatu, That there never was a great Man who enjoy'd not ſome Divine Impulſe*; ſince it did ſo generally obtain through the Pagan World to attribute all the ſurprizing Excellencies, or extraordinary Exploits of their Heroes and eminent Men to the immediate Favour and Patronage of their Hiſt. *Rom.* Gods. Muſt *Veſpaſian* reſtore life to the expiring State of *Rome*? Prodigies and Miracles ſhall prepare his way; and the extraordinary marks of ſome Divine Aſſiſtance ſhall conſecrate and deſtine him to this great Work. Muſt *Alexander* conquer the Eaſtern World? Miracles

Miracles ſhall attend his March as it did that of *Moſes*, & the *Pamphylian* Sea retreat before the one, as the Red Sea did before the other; Nor let any one think, that this was uſual only amongſt the barbarous People, *Athens* it ſelf, *Athens* the very abode of Wit and Philoſophy did attribute the Perfections of *Eleuſinian Meleſagoras* and *Cretan Epimenides* to the Inſtruction of ſome Divine Being, and thoſe of *Socrates* to his Guardian Angel, as well as the *Scythians* thoſe of their *Zamolxis*, or they of *Proconeſus* thoſe of *Ariſteas* to the peculiar favour and aſſiſtance of their Gods; nor ought it to ſeem ſtrange that the Works of *Heſiod*, *Homer*, or other Poets ſhould be aſcribed by the Heathens to Divine Inſpiration, ſince thoſe of *Aholiab* and *Bezaleel* are by *Moſes* himſelf aſcrib'd to the Spirit of God: for the Poems of the former could not but ſeem to the Heathens as Rich a piece of Fancy, as the Embroideries of the Latter, did to the *Jews*: and this puts me in Mind of an excellent Argument *Maximus Tyrius* makes uſe of to prove Vertue to be deriv'd from *Joſephus*.

from the Assistance and Bounty of God, *If Arts* (saith he) *less Excellent in their Nature, and less useful in their End, be owing to God, how much more Vertue the Divine Guide and Comfort of Humane life?* If there be no Good that descends not from above, much less surely the Chief and Soveraign good of Man, ἀλλὰ μὴν οὐδὲν ἔστιν ἄλλο ἀνθρώποις ἀγαθὸν ὃ μὴ παρὰ θεων ἔρχεται. Thus far I have proceeded to shew you what the Heathens thought of the Necessity of Divine Assistance, particularly in the Attainment of Vertue; for as to Secular Matters and Temporal Events their sense of the over-ruling Power and Influence of Divine Providence, was so notorious that 'tis not to be call'd into question; the Being, and Providence of God (in this sense of it) seemed so inseparable, that the *Epicurean* who deny'd the latter, could never find belief, when he profess'd himself to own the former; Nay, even those very Men who could not be convinc't of a Providence by the Bounty, were convinc't of it by the Severity of God in his Chastisement of Sins, hence

*Max. Tyr. Dissert.* 22.

that

that bold and brisk, thô not very Religious Reflexion of *Tacitus* upon the Miſeries the *Roman* Empire ſuffer'd under *Galba*, *Otho* and *Vitellius*, Nec enim unquam atrocioribus populi Romani Cladibus, magiſvè juſtis Judiciis approbatum eſt: non eſſe Curæ Diis ſecuritatem Noſtram, eſſe Ultionem. *The juſtice and the greatneſs of our Plagues abundantly evince the Gods concern'd, thô not for our Proſperity, yet for our Puniſhment*; ſuch is Man's diſingenious temper, that he is more eaſily convinc'd by the wideneſs and fatality of a Wound, that it was inflicted by an Almighty Arm, than he is by the greatneſs of the Benefits he receives, that they are diſtributed by a Divine Munificence; thô the number and infinite value of the good things we receive be in it ſelf a much clearer proof of a Divine Providence, than the Evils we ſuffer, can be; for theſe we can create our ſelves, thoſe none but a God can beſtow: there needs then nothing to be ſaid to convince you what the Heathens thought of Providence with reſpect to outward and temporal things; nor is

*Tacit.* l. 1. Hiſt.

it I think now to be queſtion'd, whether it were their opinion that the Divine Aſſiſtance was neceſſary to the Attainment of Vertue and Happineſs; nor would I add a word more but that the words of *Hierocles* on this Subject carry in 'em not only ſo full a Conviction, but alſo ſo extraordinary a Reliſh of a Wiſe and Religious Humility, that I cannot prevail with my ſelf to paſs 'em by: Καὶ οὐδὲν δεῖ κακῶν ἀρχῆς, οὔτε ἐνυποκειμένης, οὔτε ἔξοθεν κακοποιὸν αἰτίαν ἐνδιδούσης. ἀγαθῶν δὲ δεῖ ἀρχῆς μάλιστα καὶ μόνης, καὶ τῆς μὲν κεχωρισμένης τῶν λογικῶν οὐσιῶν, οἵος ἐστιν ὁ Θεός. τῆς δὲ ἐνυπαρχούσης αὐτῶς καὶ τὴν κατ' οὐσίαν ἐπαφῆ κυβερνώσης, οἵος ἐστιν ὁ ὄρθος λόγος, that is, *We need no Motive or Incentive to Vice but our Own Inclinations, But to make us Vertuous we ſtand in need of the aid of God, joyn'd with that of Reaſon.*

*Hierocles in Pythagori Aurea Carm.*

And this Opinion of the Neceſſity of God's Aſſiſtance ſprung not only from the Experience of the weakneſs and corruption of Humane Nature, but alſo of the Power and Goodneſs of the Divine Nature; for I cannot think that

that the Order, Beauty, and greatneſs of the Creation, the fixt and conſtant Returns of fruitful Seaſons, *the filling men's hearts with food and gladneſs*, were the only Teſtimonies which God gave the Gentiles of himſelf and his Care for Mankind: when I read that Angels are the miniſtring Spirits of God; when I read in *Daniel* of the Princes of *Grecia* and *Perſia*, and find that Provinces were committed to Angels as the Vice-Roys and Lieutenants of God, I cannot think, that theſe Devout and Charitable Spirits did with leſs Zeal in their Provinces labour to promote the Honor of God, and the Good of Man, than Evil Spirits did the Diſhonor of the one and the Ruine of the other: and unleſs the frequent Appearances of Angels in the Beginning had poſſeſs'd Men's Minds with a firm perſwaſion that there was a conſtant Commerce maintain'd between Heaven and Earth; and that Spirits very frequently did viſibly engage themſelves in the Protection and Aſſiſtance of Men; I cannot as much as Imagine, what foundation there could

be for the numerous Impoſtures of Oracles, or upon what ground the Cuſtom of putting themſelves under the Patronage of ſome Tutelary Spirit, could ſo generally have prevail'd in the Pagan World: without this Suppoſition the Poetry of *Homer* had been ſo far from being entertain'd as Sacred and Inſpir'd, that it had been univerſally contemn'd and diſlik't as an idle Rapſody of un-natural, incredible and fulſome Characters of their Gods: how could any Man, who had never heard of the Appearances of Spirits, nay who could not conceive any other Notion of ſuch Fancies than as ſomething abſurd and impoſſible, ever digeſt the groſs Confidence of a Poet bringing in a God upon the Stage at every turn? I do not therefore doubt, but that the Gentile World received very many good Offices and Advantages from good Angels, as well as ſuffer'd many Miſchiefs from Evil ones: and I think I might with good probability believe that every good Heathen as well as *Socrates* had the Aſſiſtance of a good Spirit very frequently.

Nor

Nor was the Miniſtry of Angels the only aſſiſtance that God afforded the Gentil World, but in every Age he rais'd up Wiſe and Good Men to be his Prophets or Interpreters of Nature's Law to the Gentils: I know St. *Auſtin* does in two places at leaſt of his Retractations cenſure and condemn that Charity which he had elſewhere expreſs'd for the Philoſophers or Excellent Men among the Gentils, which is the more to be wondred at, ſince he ſo frequently acknowledges himſelf to have been firſt enflam'd with the Holy Love of true Philoſophy by reading a Piece of *Tully*; but were the matter to be carried by Votes, I do not queſtion, but I could produce Teſtimonies in favour of thoſe Men, of ſuch whoſe Antiquity, Learning and Piety might more than Ballance the Authority of St. *Auſtin*: 'tis true, their Faith differ'd much from that of a *Chriſtian*, and no Man, I think, in his Wits could expect it otherwiſe; for how vaſt is the Diſtance between the Light of Nature and that of Revelation? but if we look upon thoſe Motives and Principles to

Vertue by which they were acted, they were such as a Christian need not blush at, or be asham'd of; they look't upon it not only as the Perfection of Humane Nature; the Bond and Support of Society; the Delight, the Guide and Comfort of every particular Man's life; but also as the Image of God, that which did render us like him, and therefore acceptable to him; as the only thing that could unite Man to God, that could raise Man above the bodily Pollutions of sensuality; that could enable him to outbrave the fears of Fortune and of Death; as that which could fit him for the Conversation of Heaven; And lastly, they look't upon it as the gift of God. 'Tis true, together with all this, you'l say, they were Idolaters: I do not question, but they did often partake in the Pollution of the Idolatrous multitude; But if we regard the Idolatry of their Religion, and compare it with that of the Heathen Multitude, there was a vast difference between both; and that in these three Points: the Object, the Acts of Worship, and the Effects of it.

As

As to the Object, the Philoſophers, 'tis true, did Worſhip Spirits, but good ones; the Multitude did worſhip Devils: how contradictory are thoſe Characters which the ſenſual, infatuated Multitude beſtow'd upon their Idols, and thoſe by which the Philoſophers deſcribe the Nature of their Gods or their *Genii*? Luſt and Cruelty make up the one; Purity, Goodneſs and Charity the other: This needs no proof, 'tis Evident from almoſt all the Writings of ancient Philoſophy that are extant: yet I think it cannot ſeem ſuperfluous to produce one Teſtimony containing an Account of the Nature of their *Genii* or Guardian Angels, by which it will be eaſie to conclude what Notion they had of thoſe Superiour Spirits whom they ſuppos'd to dwell always in Heaven in the preſence of the Supreme God: and whom, thô they call'd 'em Gods, they thought infinitely inferiour to that one God, their Creator and ours; But yet much Superiour as well in the Excellency of their Nature as Dignity of their place to thoſe Angels which they look't upon

as the Messengers and Ministers of God to Man, and as the Guardians of Man, and the Interpreters or Conveyers of his Requests to God. These are thus describ'd by *Apuleius*, *Hic quem Dico prorsus Custos, singularis præfectus, Domesticus speculator, proprius Curator, intimus Cognitor, assiduus Observator, individuus Arbiter; inseparabilis testis, malorum improbator, bonorum probator, si ritè animadvertatur, sedulò cognoscatur, religiosè colatur, ita ut à* Socrate *justitiâ & Innocentiâ cultus est, in Rebus incertis prospector, dubiis præmonitor, periculosis tutator, egenis opitulator, qui tibi quæat tum in Somnis, tum in Signis, tum etiam fortassè coràm, cùm usus postulat mala averruncare, bona prosperare, humilia sublimare, nutantia fulcire, obscura clarare, secunda regere, adversa corrigere.* The substance of all which is, This our truly Guardian Angel, our immediate superintendent, the Domestic spy of all our Actions, the Conscious witness of our Desires and Thoughts, the Approver and Encourager of our Vertue, and the Hater and Discourager of our Vice, if he be heedfully minded by us, rightly known, and

*Apuleius de Deo Socratis*, p. 68.

and religiouſly worſhip'd with Righteouſneſs and Innocence, as he was by *Socrates*, will be our Council in doubtful, our Guard in hazardous Affairs, &c. But all this while they were Idolaters? admit it if they were damn'd for this Idolatry, Good God! what will become of that great part of the Chriſtian Church, whoſe Practice at this Day is infinitely more inexcuſable than theirs was? becauſe God has publickly declar'd that he has appointed one Mediator, through whom he wills us to approach him: there was then Room for the Plea of Humility; but now a pretence of Humility, what can it be in Reality, but wanton fondneſs or Preſumptuous wilfulneſs?

Thus widely did the vertuous and underſtanding part of Mankind differ in the Object of their Worſhip from the ſenſual and ſtupid Herd; and ſince the manner of Worſhip is naturally derived from the Notions men entertain, of that Being, which is the Object of it; it could not be otherwiſe, but that they muſt differ as widely in the Eſſential parts of Worſhip, as they did in the

the Objects of it: Hence it was, that while the People offer'd to their Gods their Lusts and Passions, and sacrific'd to 'em in Uncleanness or Cruelty, the Philosophers thought, that nothing could be so welcom a Sacrifice to Their's, as the Imitation of their Purity and Goodness, holy Affections, and good Works: From both these differences, there follow'd a

Third, Consisting in the different Effects which the Religion of the one and the other did produce; the Idolatry of the one, (as Wickedness always will) utterly estrang'd them more and more from the true God; the Idolatry of th' other (for so I'le call it to avoid dispute) seem'd to unite them more and more to him, since they look't upon the Spirits they worshipp'd, not only as the Creatures, but most lively Images of the true God; and acknowledg'd that all good Gifts proceeded from him, thô they receiv'd 'em by the Ministry and Mediation of Angels, and that Vertue which they look't upon as the only grateful Worship of God did exalt their Minds, and by rendring

dring 'em more like him, muſt needs render 'em more near to him: Thus they talk't, whether thus they liv'd or no, is not very material to my preſent purpoſe; for after all, thô their lives ſhou'd not have come up to their Philoſophy, theſe their Diſcourſes could not chooſe but be ſome way ſerviceable to Mankind, being a manifeſt reproof to the ſtupid Idolatry, to the bruitiſh and barbarous Worſhip which then prevailed in the World. Theſe Doctrines could not but manifeſtly tend to convince the World of the Being and Nature of the Supream God, they could not but tend to reſtore the Law of Nature to its juſt Authority, and preſent the corrupt and degenerous World with a natural, that is lovely, Idea of Vertue; and give 'em a juſt ſenſe of the Obligation they lay under, and of the Sanctions, by which God eſtabliſh't that Law which he writ in the Minds of Men: who ſees not now, that God by raiſing up ſuch Men, and by aſſiſting 'em with a Spirit of Wiſdom and a Spirit of Courage, which the Conſtancy of a great many

many of 'em in Suffering for these Truths, and the Lustre and Beauty of their Writings in those dark Times do abundantly testifie, was an undoubted proof of God's Goodness to the Gentiles, and of his Concern for their true Interest and Happiness? why should not this Light, which God lent the then-wandring benighted part of Mankind, be as kindly interpreted by Man as it was design'd by God? why shou'd not the Philosophers of the Gentiles be look't upon as Priests and Prophets, well enough suited to the Oeconomy of the Law of Nature? very excellent use have Christians, even the most Learned and Pious made of 'em; and surely they ought to have prov'd as much more beneficial to the World they lived in, as they were then more necessary.

I think I have by this time said enough not only to extinguish in any Man all superstitious Fears, and unworthy Apprehensions of the Divine Majesty, but also to enkindle in him a grateful Love of God, and chearful hopes of true Happiness by establishing this

this perſwaſion upon unſhaken foundations, That God is a Good and gracious God, That he is always ready to further and aſſiſt every Man in his Endeavours after Happineſs: But now let not that Doctrine be perverted to the betraying of us into ſloth, which was deſign'd to inſpire the Mind with a freſh vigour, to quicken and confirm us in an Induſtrious purſuit after our true Happineſs: for we muſt remember, that God is not only good and gracious, but alſo

Holy too; I ſhall not inſiſt long on this Point, becauſe I think 'tis already prov'd; Holineſs being as neceſſarily imply'd in Perfection, as Love or Goodneſs: I know ſome have talk't, as if God were a mere Arbitrary Being, as if his Laws were not the Image or Expreſſion of his Nature, but merely the poſitive Precepts of an Arbitrary Will. If any Man can be ſo ſenſeleſs, as to believe that the moſt perfect Being can love or hate without any Reaſon for't; or that all the Laws and Actions of God ſhall be Conſonant to the Strickteſt Rules of Juſtice and Goodneſs, and all

2 *Holineſs of God.*

all this by Chance, for mere Arbitrary Motion is blind and unguided; such a one ſeems to me as uncapable as he is unworthy of Inſtruction: I can as ſoon believe Lightning and Thunder, Wind and Storm a God, as believe him to be a mere Arbitrary Being: The Heathens believ'd a God, *Proteus* that could turn himſelf into all ſhapes; but theſe Men believe what is infinitely more abſurd, a God, not of various and uncertain ſhapes only, but alſo of an unfixt, uncertain, indetermin'd Nature: for the Will muſt always be agreeable and conſonant to the Nature of that Being whoſe Will it is: thus Liberty and Indetermination of Will in Man proceeds from ſome contrariety in the Principles which Conſtitute him; unſteady Judgment produces unſteady Will, and bruitiſh Nature bruitiſh Will or Inclination. If we conſult the Scriptures, nothing is more Evident than the Sanctity of the Divine Nature, we are there exhorted *to walk in the Light, becauſe God is light*; and *to be holy, becauſe he is holy*; which Holineſs doth not regard the Declaration of his Will,

but

but his Nature; this being given as a Motive to oblige us to walk according to his Righteous Precepts, becauſe this alone is that which can pleaſe a Righteous God, this alone is that which can make us like and dear to him. From this Attribute of God, that is Holineſs, we may plainly infer,

Firſt, That we are not to expect any Aſſiſtance from him; but then, when that which we Enterprize, is juſt and lawful, and we our ſelves are not wanting to our ſelves; for 'tis inconſiſtent with the Holineſs of God to make his Providence the Refuge of Lazineſs or Impiety. Ἀρετῆς γὰρ ἐλπὶς ὁ Θεός ἐστιν, οὐ δειλίας πρόφασις, God is the Hope of Vertue, not the Excuſe of Sloth and Cowardize. *Plutarch de Superſtitione.* 'Tis a rational and well-weighed Prayer, which *Joſephus* puts into the Mouth of *Moſes* ſtanding on the Shore of the Red Sea; inacceſſible Rocks and Mountains deny'd the Iſraelites paſſage one way, the numerous Hoſt of the Egyptians had fill'd all other's: only before them was the Red Sea, whoſe Waves threatned as certain, and more dreadful a Deſtruction as the Sword

Sword of the *Egyptians*, there was no Weapon for Fight, no Proviſion for a Camp, no place for Flight. In this Caſe *Moſes* Prayes thus, ἄναξ αὐτὸς μὲν ἀγνοεῖς, &c. *Lord thou knoweſt, that no Contrivance, Induſtry, nor force of ours can here avail us, 'tis in thee alone to find out a way to the Reſcue of this People, who by thy Command and under thy Conduct, have left* Egypt: *deſpairing of all other ways, we fly to thee alone for ſuccour; Lord let it come ſpeedily, give us a Clear Proof of thy Divine Omnipotence and Faithfulneſs; we are in great ſtraights, great to us, but ſlight and inconſiderable to thee. The Sea is thine that ſtops our Progreſs, the Mountains that ſhut us up are thine, thou can'ſt divide this Sea, or turn its Waves into firm Land, and make us find a ſafe paſſage through the devouring Deep: or if thou think'ſt fit, thou can'ſt make us march in Triumph aloft through the open Sky:* This was a Noble Faith, this was indeed an Expectation, almoſt as wonderful as the ſucceſs it met with: But then, it was no leſs rational than ſucceſsful, their Condition

dition was capable of no Deliverance but a miraculous one, and it was their Obedience to the Divine Commands had reduc'd 'em to this Condition: This is a ſafe Rule to guide our Faith and Relyance by, in all our Diſtreſſes and Difficulties, we muſt have recourſe unto God, for theſe are the times wherein Humane infirmity requires the Support and Comfort of Divine Aſſiſtance; The utmoſt Strength and Perfection of Vertue is too weak to bear the ſhock and brunt of Calamity alone, ἔνθα δεῖ αὐτῆ Θεοῦ συλλήπτορος καὶ συναγωνιστοῦ καὶ βοηθοῦ, *it muſt be reinforc'd by Power from above.* But then theſe Difficulties muſt be ſuch to which our Vice has not betray'd us; and our own Courage and Induſtry muſt be as vigorous as our Prayers; for in vain do we beg new ſupplies of Strength, if we uſe not what we enjoy'd before. Divine Bounty doth never ſuperſede Man's Induſtry, fruitful Showers, and enlivening Rayes do not prevent, but ſecond the Labours of the Husbandman: God obſerves the ſame Method in the Production of a nobler ſort of

*Max. Tyr. Diſſer. 25.*

fruit, Wiſdom and Vertue: the Soul, as well as the Field of the Sluggard ſhall be o'rerun with Weeds; there only ſhall the Divine fruit of Philoſophy and Happineſs grow where Religious Diſcipline Tills the Ground, and wakeful Study ſows the ſeeds of thriving Truths among the furrows. Accordingly, if we conſider the lives and practice of Excellent Men, none were ever ſo much Favourites of Heaven, that its Gifts grew up in 'em, like Corn and Wine in the Golden Age without Culture or Dreſſing: Inſpiration it ſelf did not exempt Man from the Neceſſity of Induſtry, but oblige him to a greater: Thus under the Old Teſtament a Prophetic life was a life of greater ſtrictneſs and retirement than that of others; and in the New, not to mention the Watchings, the Faſtings, the Retirements, the Prayers of our Lord and Maſter, that account of himſelf which St. *Paul* gives us, will inform us, not only what his life was, but what it was expected the life of every one ſhould be that ſhar'd with him in the Miniſtry and Dignity of an Apoſtle.

ſtle. *But in all things approving our ſelves as the Miniſters of God, in much Patience, in Afflictions, in Neceſſities, in Diſtreſſes: — in Labours, in Watchings. By Pureneſs, by Knowledge.* 2 Cor. 6. Amongſt the Heathens whatever Perfection and Excellency they attributed to Humane Nature, whatever they attributed to an εὐφυία, a Contexture and frame of Nature more than Common, whatever laſtly they attributed to the favour, the Extraordinary favour of God; yet did they always judge a ſtrict life and indefatigable Induſtry neceſſary to the acquiring of true Philoſophy and Happineſs: their *Pythagoras* ſo dear to their Gods, that it ſeem'd to be a doubt among'ſt 'em, whether he were not himſelf a God Incarnate, not content to have been the Scholar firſt of *Pherecydes Syrus*, and afterwards of *Hermodamas*, travail'd firſt into *Egypt*, and afterwards to *Babylon*, and I know not whither, purſuing Wiſdom and Happineſs with great Induſtry, and as great Abſtinence. *Socrates*, however inſpir'd by his *Genius*, did yet learn Muſick of *Connus*, Poetry

of *Evenus*, Agriculture of *Iſchomachus*, Geometry of *Theodorus*, &c. And to all this he added the Religious Diſcipline of Mortification even to a voluntary Poverty: what ſhould I multiply Inſtances? there is not a Man amongſt the Gentiles remarkable for Wiſdom or Vertue, that is not as remarkable for that Travail and Self-denyal by which he purchas'd both; I add Self-denyal, Induſtry alone being not judg'd ſufficient; for,

Secondly, 'Tis eaſie in the next place to infer from the Sanctity of God, that they who expect his Aſſiſtance ſhou'd endeavour to be Good and Holy: 'tis Vertue that conſtitutes a Man a Subject of the Heavenly Kingdom and a Favourite of God, and therefore 'tis this that gives him the beſt Claim to his Protection and Patronage: Vice is a ſtate of Rebellion and Defiance againſt God, and he that has put off his Allegiance, cannot expect rationally the Benefits of that Government which he refuſes to be under. 'Tis true, the Infinite Goodneſs and Clemency of God which is not eaſily vanquiſh't by Man's

Man's Ingratitude, may purſue ſuch a Man with repeated overtures & tenders of Grace and Pardon, and may leave him in the poſſeſſion of common Benefits, ſuch as Health, Plenty, Friends, &c. but God will never confer upon him the moſt Excellent Gifts, the marks of his eſpecial Preſence, and particular Favour, he will withdraw from him the aids of his Spirit, and leave him to himſelf a blind, indigent, and forlorn Creature: *The Holy Spirit of Diſcipline will fly Deceit, and will not abide, when unrighteouſneſs comes in.* Which is nothing more than what the Heathen by the Light of Nature did affirm concerning his *Genius*, ἐὰν δὲ πῦ μοχθηρὰν δείξης ψυχῆν, ἀνέστιος αὕτη καὶ ἀνεπιστάτητος, *Wicked Souls have no good Angels ſojourning with 'em or preſiding over them.* Our Souls, like Temples muſt be prepar'd and conſecrated to him, if we would have God dwell in them: Righteouſneſs and Holineſs are the only things that Charm and Captivate God, nothing elſe can invite him to dwell with Man, this very Reaſon *Maximus Tyrius* aſſigns for the Re-

Wiſd. 1.

*Max. Tyr. Diſſert. 26.*

ſidence and abode of a *Demon* with *Socrates* after ſo extraordinary a manner. Θαυμάζεις εἰ Σωκράτει σύνην Δαιμόνιον φίλον, μανικὴν, ἀεὶ παρεπόμενον, καὶ μονονυχὶ τῇ γνώμῃ αὐτῷ ἀνακεκραμένον, ἀνδρὶ καθαρῷ μὲ τὸ σῶμα, ἀγαθῷ δὲ τὴν ψυχὴν, ἀκριβεῖ δὲ τὴν δίαιταν, δεινῷ δὲ φρονεῖν, μυσικῷ δὲ εἰπεῖν, εἰς ὃ τὸ θεῖον εὐπειθεῖ ὄσιῳ δὲ τὰ ἀνθρώπινα. *Doſt thou wonder that a Prophetic Spirit ſhould dwell with* Socrates *ſo intimately united, ſo friendly, ſo inſeparable, that he ſeem'd only not mixt, and become one with his own mind? with* Socrates *whoſe Purity of Body, Charity and Goodneſs of Soul, ſtrictneſs of Converſation, depth of Judgment, Melody, and perſwaſiveneſs of Speech, Religion towards God, and Integrity towards Man, rendred him worthy of ſuch a Gueſt, ſuch a Friend?* From all which 'tis Evident,

*Idem ibid.*

Thirdly, What different Rates we are to ſet upon the different Gifts of God: *Every good gift, and every perfect gift comes down from above*; but every Gift is not equally Good, equally Perfect, being neither equally neceſſary, nor profitable. Wealth, Power, Friends,

*Jame. 1.*

Friends, Relations, Health, Strength, Beauty, Wit, Diſcretion, Vertue, are all good; but not all equal, their value is different, and therefore the Degrees of our Importunity and of our Faith or Reliance upon God, muſt be proportion'd accordingly: a confident Faith, and an almoſt impatient Zeal doth well become us when we ſeek the Kingdom of Heaven and the Righteouſneſs thereof; when we ſeek of God the Divine gifts of Wiſdom and Vertue; but an humble Modeſty, and a moſt profound Submiſſion is the Ornament and Beauty of thoſe who are Petitioners for inferior temporal Bleſſings: for God has promis'd the former to all that earneſtly ſue for them, peremptorily and without any Tacit Reſervations; but his promiſes of the latter do always imply this Condition, *If they ſhall be for our Good*; for the Perfections of the Mind are Moral and Immutable Beauties; but thoſe of the Body, and all the gaudy things of Fortune are like the fading Beauties of a Flower, the heat ſcorches it, the cold nips it, every little chance cracks the

ſtalk, and the hand of a Child, will ſerve to crop it: Nothing therefore is more acceptable to God than the modeſty of our Petitions for *theſe* good things, and the fervency of them for the *other*, nothing more delightful to him, unleſs the granting of them: the things therefore that we are to beg of God, not only with the greateſt Importunity; but alſo in the firſt place, are thoſe which *Maximus Tyrius* thought the ſubject of *Socrates* his Prayers,

*Max. Tyr. Diſſert. 30.* ἢ οἴει τοῦτο εὔχετο ὁ Σοκράτης, ὅπως αὐτῷ χρήματα γένοιτο, ἢ ὅπως ἄρξη Ἀθηναίων— ἀλλ' εὔχετο μὲν τοῖς Θεοῖς — ἀρετὴν ψυχῆς καὶ ἡσυχίαν βίου, καὶ ζωὴν ἄμεμπτον, καὶ εὐελπιν θάνατον, *what were theſe? a vertuous Mind, a quiet State, an unblameable Life, and a chearful Death full of good Hopes. Theſe were the matter of his requeſts, not Wealth, or Honour, or Popularity, or Power, or Soveraignty.* This at once brings to my thought another Objection rais'd againſt the poſſibility of attaining Happineſs, and inſtructs me how to anſwer it.

A

A Second thing which Men charge with the guilt of their Ruine is Fortune. I might paſs over this Point ſlightly, becauſe Afflictions will come more properly to be conſider'd in the Third Volume, where I treat of *Indolence*, and becauſe I have already clear'd two great Truths, which are of themſelves abundantly ſufficient to baffle and defeat this trifling Objection, Namely *Firſt*, That Vertue and Vice, Wiſdom and Folly, are the things to which generally ſpeaking, we owe our Temporal Proſperity or Adverſity: and conſequently that thoſe, ſuppoſing the Ordinary aſſiſtance of God being in our Power, theſe muſt be ſo too. *Secondly*, That we are aſſur'd of the Aſſiſtance of God even in theſe things, as far as he ſhall ſee them truly ſubſervient to our Good. However, becauſe the perſwaſion of the Uſefulneſs, nay abſolute Neceſſity of the favour of Fortune has taken ſuch deep root in the Minds of Men, that it wou'd be thought little leſs than a Contradiction to imagine that a Man can be *Unfortunate and Happy*, (ſo that even *Seneca* himſelf *Obj.* 2.

ſelf has let fall one of the greateſt Paradoxes, a *Stoic* was ever guilty of) ſuch an Expreſſion as this better becoming the mouth of a Peaſant than a Philoſopher. *Sed ei qui ad Virtutem tendit, etiamſi multum proceſſit, opus eſt tamen aliquâ Fortunæ Indulgentiâ, adhuc inter humana Luctanti, dum Nodum illum exolvit, & omne vinculum Mortale: That not only Beginners but Proficients in Vertue, till they have put off Mortality, will ſtand in need of ſome Indulgence of Fortune*; and few Men find any belief with the World, when they talk of the contempt of Wealth, it being generally interpreted either the Lazineſs of an unactive and degenerous Mind, or the Diſſimulation of one who affects to be thought to defie Fortune, while he doth ſecretly and inwardly repine and fret at the Neglect and Coldneſs ſhe expreſſes towards him; I will therefore beſtow a little time on the Conſideration of this Objection.

Seneca de Vit. Beatâ.

*Fortune cannot prevent our Happineſs.*

What doſt thou mean by Fortune? If mere Chance, then to envy the Lot of others, or murmur at thine own, is Folly: if Providence, then 'tis Impiety; for

for whatever goodneſs guided by unerring Wiſdom doth, muſt be ſo well done, that it cannot be mended: and whatever is merely in the Power of a blind, giddy, and inconſtant humour, (which is the Notion, by which Men chooſe to expreſs Fortune) can neither be prevented, fix't nor regulated: But what is it *Secondly*, thou doſt put in the power of Fortune? the Underſtanding and Liberty of mens Minds? Wiſdom, Temperance, Induſtry, Courage, and in one word Vertue? if not, ſhe has no Influence on thy Happineſs, ſhe cannot prevent thy attainment of it, nor bereave thee of it when attain'd: If thou doſt, thou doſt enlarge the Empire of Fortune too too far. let her rule and inſult over Soldiers, Courtiers, Lovers, Factious Demagogues and Time-ſervers, but not over Philoſophers: Let thoſe who are her Minions be her Slaves: Let her diſpoſe of Money, Lands, Farms, Commiſſions, Benefices, Honours, Graces, Fame; nay, if you will, Crowns and Scepters too: Vertue, and Happineſs, and Souls are too precious Commodities to be the Sport

Sport and Traffic of Fortune: *Solom*
obſerv'd long ago, *Wiſdom crys out, ſ*
Prov. 1. *uttereth her voice in the ſtreets; ſh*
*cries in the chief place of Concourſe, a*
*the openings of the Gates; in the Cit*
John 7. *ſhe utters her words.* Our Saviour i
the great Day of the Feaſt cried ſaying
*If any man thirſt, let him come un*
*me and drink:* which is an Invitatio
of the ſame Nature with that in th
Iſaiah 55. Prophet, *Ho every one that thirſteth*
*come ye to the waters, and he that hath*
*no money: come ye buy and eat, bu*
*wine and milk without money, and with-*
*out price.* This ever was, and ever
will be true; a great Fortune is not
neceſſary for the Attainment of Faith,
Hope, or Charity. And he that is
endow'd with theſe, can't be miſerable:
you may learn the whole Syſteme of
Divine and Important Truths, you
may acquaint your ſelf with all the
Beauty and Enjoyments of Vertue, at
a very cheap rate, and you may learn
Temperance, Fortitude, Juſtice, Mo-
deſty, Conſtancy, Patience, Contempt
3 of the World, without the Aſſiſtance
of much more Wealth than will ſerve
to

o Feed and Cloath you: and can'ſt hou not be content with theſe Poſſeſ-ions? is not this a ſort of Merchan-ize to be prefer'd before that of fine Gold? I know the greater part of hoſe who accuſe their Fortune of their Miſery do at leaſt pretend that their Condition and Circumſtances of life re ſo incommodious, that they have not time to attend to the great Intereſt of the Soul, or at leaſt not with that Application which they ſhould. Alas, thus not the mean only, but almoſt all talk, from the Porter to the Prince, the Circumſtances of one are too ſtrait, too narrow; of another too full of Trouble, becauſe too full of State: one complains that he is withdrawn from his great End, by the many allurements & ſenſual temptations, to which his rank and quality in the World expoſes him: another that he is daily fretted and indiſpoſed by the little croſs Accidents and the rugged Converſation which he is neceſſarily oblig'd to bear with: one complains of too much Buſineſs, another of too little; the hurry and multitude of things diſtracts the one,

Infidel

Infidel Fears, and Anxious Deſpondencies the other. One complains that his Acquaintances and Friends are too numerous; and intrench too far upon his precious hours; another's querulous, melancholy, and peeviſh, becauſe he looks upon himſelf either for his meanneſs neglected, or for his misfortune deſerted and forſaken: Company is burdenſom to the one, and Solitude to the other. Thus all Conditions, are full of Complaints from him that trudges on his clouted Shoo, to him who can ſcarce mention the Manners or the Fortunes of the Multitude without ſome Expreſſions of contumely and diſdain. Thou Fool, do'ſt thou not ſee that all theſe Complaints are Idle and Contradictious? for ſhame correct the wantonneſs of thy humour, and thou wilt ſoon correct thy Fortune; learn to be Happy in every ſtate and every place: learn to enjoy thy ſelf, to know and value the Wealth that is in thine own Power, I mean Wiſdom and Goodneſs: learn to aſſert the Soveraignty and Dignity of thy Soul; methinks that if Philoſophy could not,

not, Pride and Indignation might conquer Fortune: 'tis beneath the Dignity of a Soul that has but a grain of ſenſe, to make Chance, and Winds, and Waves, the Arbitrary diſpoſers of his Happineſs; or what's worſe, to depend upon ſome Muſhroom upſtart which a chance-ſmile rais'd out of his Turff and Rottenneſs, to a Condition to which his mean Soul is ſo unequal, that he himſelf fears and wonders at his own height. O how I hugg the memory of thoſe honeſt Heathens, who in a rugged Gown, and homely Cottage, bid defiance to Fortune, and laugh't at thoſe pains and hazards, the Vanity and Pride of Men, not their Misfortune drove 'em to! Men may call this Pride, or ſpite in *them*; as the beggarly Rabble do's uſually envy the Fortune which it doth deſpair of; But there were a great many of theſe, who laid by, envied Greatneſs, to enjoy this quiet, thô generally-deſpicable meanneſs: But let the Contempt of the World be, what it will, in a Heathen; let it be Pride or Peeviſhneſs, Vain-glory or any thing, rather than

a Reproach to Chriſtians, what ſay you to the followers of our Lord and Maſter? *Then ſaid* Peter, *Silver and Gold have I none*; None? what haſt thou then, thou poor Diſciple of a poor Maſter? a true Faith, a God-like Charity, and unſhaken Hope: Bleſſed art thou amongſt men, nothing can make thee Greater, nothing Richer, nothing Happier, but Heaven. You ſee plainly then, a Man may be vertuous, tho' not wealthy, and that Fortune which prevents his being Rich, cannot prevent his being Happy. This Diſcourſe will never down; This is not calculated for this Age; Philoſophy muſt be a little more mannerly, and Religion a little more gentile and complaiſant than formerly, 'ere it can be adapted and accommodated to the preſent ſtate of things. Go on then, let's try how far it will be Neceſſary to condeſcend; You cannot be Happy, why? becauſe you are not *Rich*; go then to God, and beg you may be *Rich*; I have not the face to put up ſuch Arrogant and Intemperate Requeſts to God; 'tis plain then, 'tis not neceſſary to be *Rich* in Order

Acts 3.

Order to be Happy: for whatever is neceſſary to this, thou mayeſt with good Aſſurance beg of God. But thy Deſires are more humble and modeſt, thou aim'ſt at nothing but what is very Neceſſary, a fairer Houſe, another Servant, a diſh or two of Meat more for thy Friends, a Coach for thy Convenience and Eaſe, and a few Hundred Pounds a piece more for thy Children: O Heavenly Ingredients of a Rational Pleaſure! O Divine Inſtruments of humane Happineſs! O the humble and mortify'd requeſts of modeſt Souls! well, if theſe things be ſo neceſſary, and theſe deſires be ſo decent and vertuous, if thou can'ſt not be Happy, and conſequently muſt be miſerable without them; put up a Bill, repreſent thy Condition in it, Such a one-----wants a more Commodious Houſe, more Servants, more Diſhes, &c. and deſires the Prayers of the Congregation for Support under this Affliction: you are Prophane; far be it from me; I would only let thee ſee the wantonneſs of thy Deſires: if thou think'ſt this would expoſe thee to public Laughter, go to

thy Miniſter, unfold thy Caſe to him, let *him* Pray for thee, he is a good Man, and his Prayers will go far: you rally and ridicule me; Enter then into thy Cloſet, ſhut thy Door, thou may'ſt *truſt God*, he Pities and Conſiders even Humane Infirmities, I could even almoſt *in my Mind* deſire it of him, but I am aſham'd to do it in a *Set* and *Solemn Prayer*, I could almoſt make the Petition in the *Groſs*, but I bluſh to think of Deſcending to *Particulars*. Well, then I ſee plainly that Wealth in any Degree of it is ſo far from being neceſſary to our Happineſs, that it has ſo little of Uſefulneſs, or Conveniency in it, that in thy Conſcience between God and thee, thou can'ſt not think it fit to complain of the want of it.

*Every Man the Architect of his own Fortune.*

But this Anſwer will never ſatisfie him who complains of Want, or of being engag'd in continual Troubles, and toſs'd by the daily Changes and Revolutions of the World: I confeſs it, it will not; But I muſt tell ſuch a one, if Prov. 10. *Solomon*'s Obſervation be true, *The hand of the diligent makes Rich*, and that Prov. 22. other, *Seeſt thou a man diligent in his buſi-*

*buſineſs, he ſhall ſtand before Kings, he ſhall not ſtand before mean men:* then his Poverty is his Crime as well as his Calamity, he muſt redeem himſelf from this his Puniſhment by Induſtry and Prayer: As to Calamities, this muſt be acknowledg'd, that the Mind of a good and great Man which ſtands firm upon its own Baſis, a good God, a Good Saviour, and a Good Conſcience, may remain unmov'd, when the Earth trembles and the Sea roars round about him; Changes indeed befall things Temporal, but he leans not upon them; I may ſay farther, that he who upon mature Deliberation, and upon neceſſary Obligations of Duty engages himſelf in a juſt Cauſe, may be unfortunate, but he cannot be miſerable; his Sufferings carry a ſecret Pleaſure in 'em, and his Misfortunes are full of Hope and Glory, if he conſider, if he reflect, if he do not feed on vain and airy Projects, and ſuffer himſelf to be unwarily tranſported by very irrational, thô ſeemingly juſt Paſſions: I muſt laſtly add, that 'tis not the Neceſſity of their Affairs, nor the Iniquity of Times,

which doth commonly involve and intangle Men in public or private Calamities, but ſome ſecret Vanity, ſome blind impetuous Paſſion, ſome ill-laid Project, or ſome treacherous or diſhonorable fear. The State of *Rome* never felt more or greater Changes than in the life of *Atticus*, as is obvious to any one, who ſhall reflect upon the Hiſtory of his time, and yet in all the turns and mighty Changes of Fortune, *Atticus* enjoy'd a conſtant Tranquillity and well-ſettled Peace, being ſcarce ever reduc't as much as to the Neceſſity of a Retirement but once, as I remember: nor was it the meanneſs of his Quality, or the narrowneſs of his Fortune that ſecur'd him, he was a Man great in both; nor was it the ſecrecy of a private life, or the ſluggiſhneſs of a ſtupid Mind, which rendred him unworthy of any Man's fear, and unable to provoke a Danger; No, he was a Man, as well for the Eminence of his Parts, and Vigour of his Mind, as for the Largeneſs of his Fortune, well known to the greateſt and moſt Active men of all Pa. ties; and yet ſteering his life by the

the Rules of Vertue and true Wiſdom, he lived untouch'd by, unconcern'd in, the ſtrange Alterations of ſo long a life as his, which were ſuch and ſo many, that the Hiſtorian has obſerv'd, that they who were one day in the height of Power and Honour, were the next in the Gulph of Danger and Deſpair; ſo that his Remark is generally very true, *Sui cuiq; mores fingunt Fortunam. Every man may faſhion and ſhape his fortune as he will his manners.* Nor was the ſucceſs of his Behaviour leſs in private than public. For *Cornelius Nepos* has obſerv'd in his Life, That thoſe Friendſhips he entred into, he was very Happy and Conſtant in; nay, ſuch was the Gentleneſs, ſuch the Diſcretion of his Behaviour, that it preſerv'd him in the favour of an Unkle (I think) of his, who was ſo ſowr and peeviſh that none could pleaſe him, ſuch a *Nabal* a man could not ſpeak to him, nay he not only kept in with him, but poſſeſſed him ſo entirely, that he was left his Heir. Nor was all this in *Atticus*, the Effect of Temper or Nature, but of Vertue: *Neq; id fecit natura* Corn. Nep. in Vitâ Attici. Ibid.

*naturâ Solum, quanquam omnes ei parerent, ſed etiam Doctr. nâ : nam & Principum Philoſophorum ita percepta habuit præcepta, ut iis ad vitam agendam, non ad Oſtentationem utebatur ; For he had ſtudied Philoſophy not for Oſtentation, but the Conduct of his life.* I might now preſume, I had given ſatisfaction to this Objection, eſpecially, ſince I oblige my ſelf to take the Caſe of Temporal and outward Calamities into full Conſideration hereafter. But the infection is got into the maſs of Blood, and has diffus'd it ſelf through Mankind, and 'tis not a ſlight and weak Medicine that can Purge it out ; therefore I have obſerv'd that the Heathen were never more copious or more vehement than in the Refutation of this Errour ; our Baptiſm doth ſcarce proclaim a more ſolemn War againſt the Pomps and Vanities of the World, than Philoſophy did in all Ages : No doubt therefore the Expugning this Fancy which makes Man's Happineſs depend upon his Fortune in the World, muſt needs be a matter of great Importance, ſince both Revelation and Reaſon have ſo earneſtly

and

and ſolemnly endeavour'd it; I ſhall not therefore I hope ſeem impertinent or tedious, if looking upon this Objection as conſiderable, in *Opinion* thô not in *it ſelf*, I treat it with more Reſpect and Solemnity than it really deſerves.

*Fortune not neceſſary to Happineſs.*

My Deſign here is to examine what real Good or Convenience there is in Wealth, how Valuable. or how Neceſſary 'tis, and that not in a Declamatory or Sophiſtical, but ſuch a ſober and rational manner as may be Satisfactory and Convictive to every unprejudic'd Mind. *Firſt* therefore, I will give ſome account, whence 'tis that Men are ſo intent upon their Worldly intereſt, ſo wholly bent upon being Rich: *Secondly*, I will ſtate what is meant by a Competency, and what the Advantage and Neceſſity of it is. *Thirdly*, I will conſider what the natural tendency of Wealth is. From all which, it will eaſily appear, what Connexion & Dependence there is between our Fortune and our Happineſs.

1.

2.

3.

If we enquire whence 'tis, Men are ſo intent upon the World; one Reaſon is, a ſecret Infidelity, Men are deſirous

to lay ſuch a Foundation as Time cannot wear, nor Winds and Tempeſts o'rethrow: they cannot truſt Providence, till they ſee, or at leaſt fancy themſelves in a Condition to defie it: and this they look upon as a great piece of Prudence, to provide for themſelves a ſafe Retreat at once from the Storms and Changes that generally purſue Mankind; and the Contempt which unjuſtly purſues *thoſe*: I cannot tell which is the greater, the Folly or the Impiety of this Humour; for 'tis a wretched Folly to flatter our ſelves with the vain hopes of a Security which is not to be found any where beneath Heaven; or to imagine that a great State is leſs liable to the blaſts of Fortune, than a ſmall one; or to fancy that the Contempt which attends thoſe who never riſe, is more inſupportable than that which attends thoſe who fall: Nor is the Impiety one jot leſs than the Folly; for what can be more wicked than amidſt ſo many viſible and undeniable proofs and aſſurances of a God, and Providence, to let the ſame anxious and jealous Fears fill and diſturb our Minds,

Minds, which would ſcarce be pardonable, if there were neither? what greater Affront can we offer to the Goodneſs, the Wiſdom, the Omnipotence and Faithfulneſs of God, than to refuſe to repoſe the Care, the Truſt of providing for us upon him, when he not only offers, but preſſes himſelf upon the Imployment? a ſecond Cauſe why we ſo eagerly purſue Wealth, is *Senſuality*; Being Strangers to the Peace and Joy of Faith, inſenſible of the Divine Delight of Charity, uncapable of the Extaſies, of the full Aſſurance of Hope, and in general of the Rational Pleaſure of a Philoſophical Mind; what can be expected but that both Wind and Tide ſhould drive us violently on another ſhore? I mean the whole Force and Inclination of our Nature ſhou'd impetuouſly tend towards ſenſual, worldly Pleaſures and Enjoyments; and conſequently towards Wealth, as the Neceſſary Inſtrument of Both: you grant therefore that Wealth is Neceſſary to a pleaſurable life? To a pleaſurable one 'tis, to a pleaſant one 'tis not. The ſenſual Pleaſure of a ſenſual Man,

Man, *i.e.* one who is all Body and Fancy requires a good Fund of Wealth, but the Temporal Enjoyments of a vertuous Man do not: I grant, that eaſe and reſt are Neceſſary to the Sluggiſh, ſtate and height to the Proud, variety to the Intemperate and the Wanton, and to all this Wealth is Neceſſary; but I deny that Sloth or Pride, Intemperance (I will add Niceneſs) or Wantonneſs is Neceſſary to our Happineſs; nay, I will confidently affirm, that a vigorous Mind and active Body is a much greater Pleaſure than ſluggiſh Eaſe; that an humble, if contented ſtate is much more eaſie than Proud Grandure and the ἀλαζονέια βίυ, or *the Oſtentation of life* in St. *John*, that ſober and thrifty Temperance is a far greater Pleaſure than Variety, and the Modeſty, Conſtancy, and Friendſhip of a Vertuous affection is not only a more calm, generous and ſteady, but a more tranſporting ſatisfaction than the fancyful Rambles of a wandring Luſt: And I hope none will be ſo fond as to judge Wealth Neceſſary to the obtaining theſe Vertues; if any are, their

their Sillineſs and Vanity is to be exploded and laught at, not ſeriouſly confuted: For who in his Wits can believe, that Eaſe is the beſt Nurſe of Induſtry; that affected State and Ambitious Grandure, are the Parents of Humility and Contentment; That Affluence and daily Delicacies are the moſt Effectual Inſtruments of Abſtinence; and that Variety is the Mother of Chaſtity? If not, then 'tis apparent how far ſerviceable Wealth is, for all that lies in its Power is to provide for us theſe Temptations: But thô a Wiſe and Vertuous Man wants no Wealth, I deny not but that he needs a Competency; what this is, is the next thing to be enquir'd: for this pretext of Having what is enough, is frequently made uſe of to juſtifie and legitimate Avarice and Ambition.

The meaſure of Competency is the Neceſſities of Nature, not the Extravagancies of Fancy: A little Heap, where frugal Temperance and humble Induſtry are the Stewards, is a plentiful Proviſion; But wherever waſtful Luxury and wanton Fancy rule and govern, Plenty

2. *Competency.*

Plenty it ſelf is a mere Dearth: what Treaſures would not the Expenſive Riots of *Apicius*, *Orata*, *Clodius* exhauſt? how ſmall a Particle of which wou'd have been ample Revenues to *Curius*, *Æmilius Pappus*, or *Fabricius*? Competency then is that Proviſion which the Vertuous Man needs as his *Viaticum*, as the Support of Life, and Inſtrument of Vertue, the modeſt wiſh of *Jacob*, Gen. 28. *Bread to eat, and Raiment to put on:* The Uſe and Advantage of this, is not to keep us or our Children from being expos'd to the Contempt (that is too ſlight an Evil for a Chriſtian or Philoſopher to dread) but to the barbarous Pity or Charity of Rich and great Friends. A ſecond Uſe or Advantage of it is, that it helps to keep the Mind erect and free; that it puts us into a Capacity of Imploying our Reaſon, and enjoying our ſelves our own way; and leaves us not under any Temptation to unmanly Compliances, or Unchriſtian Jealouſies and Fears: for he whoſe Ambition goes not beyond this, will eaſily truſt Providence, if he believe there be any; or

or his own Induſtry, if he believe none: how he that divides and ſeparates Providence and Induſtry will thrive in this matter, I know not; but he that joyns his own Induſtry with God's Bleſſing obtain'd by Prayer, can never miſs of this his aim. Having proceeded thus far, I ſhall be more eaſily able to reſolve,

Thirdly, What the Value, what the Neceſſity of Riches is. 'Tis a pretty Speech which *Pluto* in *Stobæus* makes in the Defence and Commendation of Wealth; but in the firſt place, I do not call every thing Wealth, that is not mere Beggary; I have allow'd of a Competency as very Convenient even for a Vertuous and Wiſe man; in the next place, I trouble not my ſelf about the Grandure or Security of Kingdoms, thô Peradventure the *Scythian Poverty*, or *Roman* Vertue is a ſtronger Bulwark, a better Guard of theſe than the Riches of *Aſia*: And in the laſt place, I do not enquire, what uſe Wiſdom and Vertue are able to make of Wealth, which can extract Pleaſure and Happineſs even out of Troubles and Afflictions,

*The Tendency of Wealth.* Serm. 89. *ex Telete.*

ctions, but what the Natural tendency of Wealth is; theſe things being obſerv'd, that and all other Diſcourſes of the like Nature will appear to contain very little of ſolid Truth, and to have very little of weight in them: let us come to a tryal of the Matter. If Contentment and Security were the natural Effects of Wealth, if to be Rich and to be Happy were the ſame thing, then it were not to be wondred at, that Wealth ſhould be the great Idol and Ambition of Mankind; but if it neither free Men from thoſe Paſſions of the Mind, nor thoſe Diſeaſes of the Body, nor other Calamities which imbitter life to the Inferiour part of Mankind; what then is the Advantage of it? Let us then ſtand ſtill and conſider this, do not Hatred and Anger, Envy and Anxiety, Ambition and Luſt reign more frequently and more inſolently in the Boſom of the great and wealthy, than of the labouring Cottager? Nay, I believe upon a narrow ſearch we ſhall find that ſome Paſſions are the Prerogative of a proud and inſolent Fortune, and are not incident to a mean one,

ſuch

ſuch as haughty Anger, irreconcileable Hatred, an unlimited Ambition and an uneaſie Wantonneſs: the Plowman and the Artiſt, the Labourer and the Hind know none of theſe; Ambition do's not break their Sleep, nor a faſtidious Niceneſs make 'em diſguſt and nauſeate their beſt Meals, Nor are they troubled with wild and ungovernable Luſts, bred by Exceſs, and nurs'd by gaudy Bravery, deluding Arts and more deluding Fancy: Nor are the Rich more Exempt from the Diſeaſes of the Body, than from the Paſſions of the Mind; exceſſive Meals, diſorderly Sleeps, much Sloth and much Wantonneſs, as they are the priviledges of a gay Fortune, ſo are they the ſources of Innumerable Diſeaſes: Scurvies, Gouts, Rheumatiſms, Surfeits, Putrid Feavers, and I know not what are the Conſequences of Proud Idleneſs, and Exceſſive Enjoyments, *i. e.* of ill govern'd Wealth: whereas a plain Table and a ſober Life, Regular and Cheap Pleaſures and moderate Labour beget and improve an entire Habit of Health, and prolong life to the utmoſt Period

of

of Nature: This is a ſecond great Advantage of Wealth, that it gives us a diſeas'd Body, and a ſhort Life: Sure then, the Rich are the Minions of Fortune, and the Diſaſters which oppreſs the reſt of Mankind touch not them: On the quite contrary, all Annals are ſtuff'd with the Calamities and Misfortunes of theſe Men, rifled Wealth, defeated Hopes, baffled Ambition, blaſted Honours, broken dejected Power, and in a word mighty Changes are the Argument of Tragedies, and the Subject of a loud and raving Paſſion: whereas the Strokes of Fortune are ſoft and gentle, when they light upon the mean, theſe are not capable of Tragical Alterations; their Minds are of a ſtronger Temper, their Bodies firmer, their Senſes not nice and delicate, and their little Sufferings draw not after 'em the mournful Pomp and State which attends the fall, I may call it, the Funeral of a great one: Here Envy inſults not, Malice traduces not, the petulant Multitude do not follow the Corps with confus'd Clamours and Cenſures: Nor do Acquaintance flock

to

to expreſs outwardly a Cold and formal Regard, while they feel inwardly a ſecret Joy, for that Man's fall is always unpittied whoſe Power was a barren and uſeleſs Title: But to come cloſer yet, what is it that makes up the Comfort of Humane Life? a quiet State, faithful Friends, good Wives and good Children? if we conſider it, we ſhall find the Life of Man a little beholden to Wealth in theſe Points: in all Changes of time, are not the Rich the greateſt Sufferers? the mark of Envy, the prey of Violence and Uſurpation? have they not more Enemies as well as more Friends than other Men? Friends did I ſay? they have None. They have Dependents, Flatterers, Companions and Miniſters of their Pleaſures, no Friends. Hence is it, that nothing is more Common, than for thoſe above us to wiſh for the Content, the Eaſe, and Enjoyment of thoſe below 'em: for the truth of it is, (if we proceed) Relations which are the pleaſure of Men of Middle Fortune, are the Burden and Incumbrance of the Rich and Great, for in all their Contracts and

Diſpoſals, they are Servants to their Fortune, not their Inclination, Marriages amongſt theſe are the Matches of Eſtates, not Minds; and therefore they attend not to the Temper or the Honour of the Families they link with, nay, what is worſe, they have no regard to their Education, or Vertue, or Wiſdom: But Money weighs all down, whatever Objections are put in the oppoſite Scale; in the whole Method of their Lives, they are Slaves to their Fortune, and to their Reputation in the World, judging themſelves obliged to live, not according to their Reaſon, but their quality and the Humour, that is, the Folly of the Age, and of the Acquaintance they converſe with: Nor dare they walk by any other Maxims, in the Government of the neareſt to them, or in the Education of their Children, in all theſe things they muſt do what becomes Men of their figure in the World, not what becomes true Wiſdom. Who ſees not now that upon the whole, there is in this State or Condition of life more incumbrance and leſs true freedom; more of ſhew, and

and leſs of Enjoyment than in any other? If all this be true, you'l be apt to conclude Mankind is Mad, if Wealth neither makes us more Wiſe, nor more healthy, more free in our ſelves, nor more fortunate in our Relations, what bewitches Men into this Extravagant Dotage? what makes the World gaze upon and envy the Rich, as the only Happy Creatures? what makes us fawn upon 'em and flatter 'em, as the only Powerful and great things the World has? Something there is in it, and that's this, we ſee the outſide, the Pomp and the Pageantry of Wealth: we ſee the gilt Coaches, the rich Liveries, the little Town of Buildings, gay Furniture, and a whole Squadron of Diſhes; and together with all this, the gaudy Trappings the Happy Man's bedight with; the Port, the Grace, the Confidence that all this gives to Ignorance and Nonſenſe: But if you'l conſider this truly, you will find all this mere Pageantry and Apparition, nothing ſolid nor real in it. As for gay Cloathing; 'tis an Advantage not worth the ſpeaking to, 'tis the Pride

of Children, and the weakeſt of Women, the little Soul that converſes no higher than the Looking-glaſs and a Phantaſtick Dreſs may help to make up the ſhew of the World, but muſt not be reckon'd among the rational Inhabitants of it; ſerving only as Painture, Images, and Ornaments to the Stage, not Actors on it: as to all the Reſt, they *ſeem* to enjoy ſome Preheminence, but *doth* not; the mean Man eats his Morſel with more Pleaſure, becauſe more appetite; and ſleeps with more delight, becauſe with more eaſe, neither oppreſs'd in Body by Luxury, nor in Mind by Care: *The ſleep of a labouring man is ſweet, whether he eat little or much; but the Abundance of the Rich will not ſuffer him to ſleep:* All the reſt, as numerous Attendents, many Dependents, Flocks of Paraſites, and the like, are but mere incumbrance, the unwieldineſs of a groſs and heavy Body: all theſe ſerve to increaſe the Noiſe and Hurry, the Care and the Pomp, but not the Pleaſure or Enjoyment of the Wealthy. Hence was that Obſervation of *Solomon*, *If Riches increaſe,*

Eccleſ. 5. 12.

*creaſe, they are increas'd that eat them, and what profit has the owner thereof, ſaving the beholding of it with his Eyes?* Ibid.
a moſt Extraordinary Happineſs, this, to be the Hoſt of the Neighbourhood, to have one's Houſe the Rendezvous of the Idle and the Gluttonous, of Buffoons and Flatterers, and yet if the Rich live otherwiſe, preſently they grow infamous and ſtink, they are look't upon as *Indian* Graves, where Wealth is not laid up, but loſt and buried: they are loaded with the Curſes of ſome, with the Hatred of others, and with the Cenſures of all; and this is almoſt as bad as to be peſter'd with Impertinences and Flattery; This is the whole of the matter, if People gaze and admire, 'tis their Ignorance: if they fawn or flatter, 'tis their Baſeneſs; but ſtill remember, 'tis the People, 'tis the Croud that doth this: ſhould a Man of Letters or of Spirit, be over-awed by the Laws of Cuſtom or ſome unhappy Neceſſity into the Commiſſion of this Idolatry, he could not but deſpiſe the Idol he bow'd down to, and ſee it a mere lump of Wood or Stone, not-

withſtanding its gaudy Dreſſes; thô I acknowledge, I comprehend not, what can reduce a Philoſopher to this piece of ſhameful Diſſimulation; the Soul that is great in it ſelf is ſo in deſpight of Fortune: he that can live vertuouſly, can live Happily in the loweſt Sate: he that deſires but little, has no need of much: he that can deſpiſe Riches, can deſpiſe the Inſolence and Pride of the Rich: in one word, he that can Command himſelf, needs be a ſlave to none. After all, I think it were poſſible to evince the miſchievouſneſs of Wealth as plainly, as I have its uſeleſneſs; but that were to preſs the point further than my preſent Deſign requires, for my Buſineſs was to ſhew, either that Fortune, was not neceſſary to our Happineſs, or as far as it is, that 'tis in our own Power: both which I may now preſume my ſelf to have ſufficiently perform'd. I will therefore paſs on to the

*Obj. 3. From Fate anſwer'd.*

3. Objection from Fate. Amongſt the many Shifts and Devices Men have invented to quiet Conſcience, and at once to excuſe and enjoy their Luſts, this is none of the leaſt that they impute all

to

to Fate, not only the Events that befall 'em, but, even their Crimes and Follies, as *Juvenal* did the Diſſoluteneſs of *Peribomius*; that is, they believe or wou'd be thought to do ſo, that all our Affections and Actions, and all Events that befall us are fatal and inevitable; That no Prudence can prevent, no Induſtry fruſtrate the Decrees of Fate, againſt which we ſtruggle but in Vain. This is the popular and general Notion of Fate taught firſt by *Democritus*, *Empedocles*, *Heraclitus* and *Leucippus*, and ſo deriv'd down from Age to Age, and prevailing moſtly amongſt the Multitude. Thus *Bacchylides* in *Stobæus* his *Eclogee* expreſſes the popular Notion of Fate, θνητοῖς ἄκ ἀυθαίρετοι ὄ τ' ὄλβον τ' ὄτ' ἄχαμπτ[illegible] ἄρης, ὅτε πάνφερσις φάσις· ἀλλ' ἐπιχειπ[illegible]ει νέφ[illegible] ἄλοτε ἐπ' ἄλλαν γᾶν ἁ πάνδωρ[illegible] δεῖσα. *'Tis not in Man to chooſe his ſtate, whether wealthy Peace, or Inexorable War, or all-confounding Sedition; but Fate the Soveraign Arbiter of Each, leads us on blind and hood-wink't to our Ruine.* And *Euripides* expreſſes the other part of the opinion containing the Adamantine *Stob. Ec. Phyſ. c. 9.*

Chain, the insuperable Necessity of Fate thus, μόρσιμα δ' οὔτε φυγεῖν θέμις, οὔτε σοφία τῆς ἀπώσεται, ἀλλὰ μάταν πρόθυμος ἀεὶ πόνον ἕξει. *'Tis not permitted us to shun our Destiny, nor can any Humane Prudence ward its blows, nor can any thing but endless and fruitless troubles attend our Contention with it.* 'Tis a sign of a Desperate Cause or Desperate Impudence to dispute against our Common sense, and to defie the daily Experience of Mankind; and yet all this, the Abettors of an Universal Fate (such as this is) are guilty of; for they deny that Liberty in Man which all Laws Divine and Humane, all Exhortations and Advices, all Commendation and Reproof, *i. e.* plainly God and Man, do suppose; for if the Mind of Man were o're-rul'd, if his present and future State were fixt and determin'd by a Fatal and Inexorable Necessity; then as Laws, Advice and Exhortation would be useless and impertinent, so all Reproof and Punishment would be unjust, and all Praise and Reward undeserv'd: and yet thô the Assertion of Fate be oppress'd and o're-born by

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all theſe Abſurdities, yet it wants not at this Day its maintainers and ſticklers; For there are who maintain a Neceſſity in humane Affairs, and Events deriv'd from the Influence of Heavenly Bodies, which Notion of Fate take in the words of *Manilius*:

*Fata Regunt Orbem, certâ ſtant omnia Lege,*
*Longaq; per Certos ſignantur tempora Curſus,*
*Naſcentes morimur, Finiſq; ab Origine pendet.*

*Manilius Aſtronomicon.* 4.

Fates Rule the World, fix't Laws do all things guide,
And long Times through their certain Channels ſlide.
Death of the Birth, of the Beginning the End,
And all the Events of Humane life depend.

And there are others, who thô they condemn Judicial Aſtrology in ſet Treatiſes writ againſt it, do yet maintain ſuch Eternal Decrees as Imploy a more inflexible

inflexible Fate than any Pagan but *Democritus*, and those just now mention'd with him, did ever hold; Nay, a Fate more impious than that of *Democritus*, for what he imputed to senseless matter, these do to God; and as much more rigid as it is more impious than his, for he never thought of another life wherein Eternal Misery shou'd punish those Actions that were unavoidable in this.

Now the Reason why this Doctrine of Fate, this absurd and baffled Doctrine is so greedily embrac'd and eagerly defended by many, is very plain; it feeds the Vanity and Curiosity of some, and the Pride of others, 'tis a luscious Pleasure to curious and vain Minds to fancy themselves Masters of the starry *Cabala*, able to spell out and interpret the Laws of Fate, and pry into the Destinies of future Ages, which are cover'd with thick Clouds and Impenetrable Darkness to all but them alone; 'tis a delicious pleasure no doubt of it, to the Proud and haughty, and ill-natur'd, to see themselves caressed and exalted by God as his particular Favourites,

vourites, while the miſerable Multitude, the reſt of Mankind are excluded from the Capacity and much more, the Hopes of Happineſs and Heaven: and in general 'tis an acceptable opinion to the looſe and profligate, ſince 'tis a ready Apology for Idleneſs and Luſt, and all manner of Sins: for Men might Sin confidently and without remorſe, if they did Sin fatally; or rather nothing could be branded with the Infamy of Sin and Shame, when whatever Men did, were the Effect, the unavoidable Effect of Nature and Neceſſity, an act of Obedience to thoſe Fatal Laws which they could not tranſgreſs. *Tertullian* therefore ſpeaks very properly when he ſaith, *Mentis malæ impetus vel Fato vel Aſtris imputant, nolunt ſuum eſſe quod malum agnoſcunt: They impute the Heat and Sallies of their Luſt to Stars and Fate, being unwilling to Charge themſelves with the guilt of that which they own to be Evil.* Tertul. Apol.

This is the uſe *Cerealis* makes of this Doctrine of Fate in *Tacitus*, the Roman Legions had be-

*Donec* Cerealis *mulceret animos, Fato acta Dictitans quæ militum Ducumq; Diſcordiâ, vel fraude Hoſtium evenisſent.* Tacit. l. 4. Hiſtor.

hav'd

hav'd themſelves very unworthy of that Name and Reputation they poſſeſs't, and were extreamly dejected under the Conſcience of it; therefore he to chear and encourage 'em, and to wipe off the ſtain and diſhonour of their Miſdemeanour, imputed to Fate, that which ought with truth to have been imputed to the Diſſention of their Leaders and themſelves, and to the Fraud and Cunning of their Enemies. From this little that has been ſaid, as it appears why Proud and Vicious Men contend for Fate; ſo does it likewiſe of what importance it is, to free Men's Minds from a perſwaſion ſo pernicious to the Intereſt of Vertue, the Peace of the Public, the Happineſs of Man, and the Honour of God. To which purpoſe that I may contribute all I can,

1. I'le conſider, *Firſt*, On which ſide ſtands the Advantage of Authority,

2. whether for or againſt Fate. *Secondly*, what plain Reaſon and as plain Revelation do dictate in this Point.

As to the firſt, I will not pretend to make a juſt and intelligible Collection of the Different Notions which have been

been taken up of Fate, 'tis Evident from that which *Grotius* has done of this kind, not only how tedious and voluminous, but alſo how obſcure and confus'd the Diſcourſes of Men have been on this Subject; I ſhall only therefore as far as my Memory will ſerve me, conſider their Opinions in ſuch a manner as the Nature of this preſent Enquiry ſhall oblige me. Moſt Philoſophers do agree in one general Notion of Fate, that it is a Connexion or Series of Cauſes ſucceſſively depending upon one another, and producing a Neceſſary Effect or Event, εἱρμὸν αἰτιῶν ἀπαραβάτον; But their Opinions concerning the firſt Ground or Original of this Neceſſary Connexion or Dependence were very Various, ſome aſcribing it to *Dæmons* or Spirits, ſome to the Influence of *Stars*, ſome to the Circumaction or whirling about of the Heavens, ſome to an Univerſal Soul, ſome to the Force of Motion, ſome to the Contexture and Contrivance of Nature, others to Atoms, and others to God; and indeed ſince *Matter* or *Mind*, are the two only things into which all Philoſophers *Nemeſius.*

phers have ultimately Reſolv'd their Search and Enquiries after the Original of all things, they ought to have look't for no other Original of Fate than one of theſe two: but this concerns my preſent Queſtion but very little, for if Man be over-rul'd and determin'd by Fatal Laws, it matters little how he came to be ſo: Nor did I mention this variety of Opinions for any other Reaſon than this, that it gives us juſt Occaſion to ſuſpect Fate it ſelf as an Erroneous and ill-grounded Poſition; for obſcurity and intricacy and multiplicity of different Notions about the ſame thing are the general Marks of Falſhood and Error: but there are two things very material to be enquir'd. *Firſt*, How far the Empire or Dominion of Fate was generally extended: And *Secondly*, what kind of Neceſſity, or what degrees of it were generally ſuppos'd to conſtitute Fate. As to the Extent of its Power, this one thing is very Remarkable, that the Heathens did Exempt the *Mind* of Man from its Soveraignty. *Democritus* indeed believ'd the Soul of Man as *Neceſſarily* and

*Fatally*

*Fatally* mov'd by the Impreſſion of his Atoms as any other Natural or Irrational Body, but *Epicurus* deſerted him in this, and following the Conduct of common Senſe & Experience, acknowledg'd the Liberty of the Soul of Man, and labour'd (as *Plutarch* tells us) with all his might to aſſert it, and to preſerve the Diſtinction of Vertue and Vice, which Fate deſtroys; to ſerve this *Hypotheſis*, it was that he invented that new Motion of his Atoms, call'd by *Lucretius Clinamen*, ſufficiently expos'd by *Tully*, and how well defended by *Gaſſendus*, I am not concern'd to Examine; for I have produc'd his Opinion only as an Inſtance of the clearneſs of this Truth, That the Soul of Man is not ſubject to Fate; for had not its *Liberty* been undeniable and ſelf-evident, the Principles of *Epicurus* his Philoſophy had certainly oblig'd him to follow *Democritus* in this, as in all other Points, and to have believ'd the Soul it ſelf, o're-rul'd by Fate. The Poets indeed made the Monarchy of Fate ſo Univerſal, that they believ'd the Gods themſelves ſubject to it. Thus

*Jupiter*

*Jupiter* in *Homer* bemoans the Fate of his *Sarpedon*, which he could not prevent: And thus another Poet represents *Apollo* striving in vain by all the Power of Art, and Vertue of Herbs to restore life to his *Hyacinthus*. Nor was this only a Poetic Fancy, 'tis usual with *Plato* to extend the Dominion of Fate over the Gods themselves; but this was no wonder, for Fate with him imports the immutable Laws of the Supreme God, and God's those Spirits that were created by him. The *Stoics* indeed (at least some of them) assign'd a worse Reason for this Soveraignty of Fate, namely, That the Supreme Architect could not Correct the Defects and Incapacities of *Matter*. After all this, 'tis no wonder that St. *Austin* should take this to be the general Notion of Fatal Events, that they were such as proceeded from the Necessity of I know not what Order, maugre God and Man: But all this while, it must be remembred, that this Dominion of Fate, thô it limited the Power, did not over-awe or necessitate the *Will* of their Gods. And no wonder, for I never find as I remark't

*De Civ. Dei l. 5. c. 1.*

mark't before, that any but *Democritus* and his Tribe, did extend the Dominion of Fate over the Soul of Man: *Hierocles* makes the *Pythagorean* Fate nothing elſe but the Execution of that immutable Divine Decree, That the *Vertuous* ſhould be rewarded, and the *Vicious* puniſh't, and at the ſame time doth utterly deny that Man is any way neceſſitated or over-rul'd in his Choice or Actions. *Alcinous* repreſenting the Platonic Fate, determines indeed the Events of things fatal, but at the ſame time, he leaves the Minds of Men poſſeſs't of their juſt and natural Liberty. And whatever unavoidable Connexion of Cauſes the *Stoic* talk't of, no one did more exalt and magnifie the Liberty and Power of the Mind of Man: So that * *Nemeſius* might very well in general affirm, That the wiſeſt of the *Greeks* believ'd Mens Minds free, and the Events of their Actions Fatal, whether he had reſpect to the former or the Latter. Thus far then, the *Pythagorean*, *Platonic*, and *Stoic* agreed, That

*De Decret. Platonicis*, c. 19.

* Οἱ δὲ λέγοντες τὴν αἵρεσιν τῶν πρακτῶν ἐφ' ἡμῖν εἶναι. τὴν δὲ τῶν αἱρεθέντων ὑπόβασιν ὀπὶ τὴν εἱμαρμένην εἶσι δὲ τῶν Ἑλλήνων σοφώτατοι, Nemeſ. c. 37.

the Mind of Man was free, That Events were Fatal: Now 'tis not to be wondred at, that they who did not judge the Calamitous or Prosperous Issues of outward things to deserve the Name of Good or Evil, should place such Events wholly out of our own Power, and deem 'em no way dependent upon our Behaviour: 'tis enough that they left Man's true Happiness, *i. e.* Wisdom and Vertue in his own Power, which they always did. Ἀλλὰ οὐκ εἰσι (*scil.* Θεοὶ) ἢ μέλει αὐτοῖς περὶ ἀνθρωπείων, ἢ τοῖς ἐπὶ κατ' ἀλήθειαν κακοῖς, ἵνα μὴ ἅπαντα ὁ Ἄνθρωπος, ἐπ' αὐτῷ τὸ πᾶν ἔθεντο. And it deserves here to be remembred that they confin'd this Fatality of Events to this life, for such of them as did believe the Eternal Duration or Immortality of the Soul, did also believe that its Misery or Happiness in that State, did depend on its Behaviour in this. But how came the *Platonics* and *Pythagoreans*, who set that Value upon Temporal things which they deserv'd, to agree thus far with the *Stoics* in Asserting the Fatality of Events? or how came the storm

*Marcus Antonin.* l. 2.

and

and fury of all Writers to Light ſo heavily only upon the Stoic's Fate, if theſe taught the ſame thing with *Pythagoras* and *Plato*? they did indeed all of 'em acknowledge Events Fatal, and yet they differ'd widely in their Notion of this Fatality; for *firſt* the *Stoic* Fate depended partly upon *Matter*, partly upon God, whereas the *Platonic* Fate depended wholly upon the Will of a Wiſe Powerful and good God. *Secondly*, The *Pythagorean* and *Platonic* did believe Good and Evil to be diſpens'd by a Divine and immutable Law, but ſo, that the one ſhould be the Reward of Vertue, and the other the Puniſhment of Vice: So that Fate with 'em was nothing elſe but the Execution of that Decree of God in the Prophet, *Say ye to the Righteous that it ſhall be well with him; for they ſhall eat the fruit of their doings. Wo unto the Wicked,* Iſaiah 3. *it ſhall be ill with him; for the Reward of his hands ſhall be given him.* But the *Stoics* in their Aſſertion of the Fatality of Events had no ſuch Regard to the Vertue or Vice of Man; nor did they ſettle or ſuppoſe any ſuch Neceſſa-

ry Connexion or Dependence between Vice and Vertue of Man on the one hand, and Punishment and Reward on the other. *Thirdly*, thô the *Platonics* taught that all things were comprehended within the Compass of Fate, that is the general and immutable Laws of the Supreme Being, yet did they not believe th t all particulars were decreed and determin'd, whereas the *Stoics* (if we follow the Common Opinion) did not exempt any particular Event from the Over-ruling Necessity of Fate.

Sen. Oed. *Quicquid patitur mortale genus,*
*Quicquid facimus venit ex alto;*

*Whatever ill unhappy Man sustains*
*Whate're he Doth, 'tis what his Fate ordains.*

And *lastly*, The Necessity of the *Stoic* Fate was Rigid and Inflexible, but that of the Platonic was not, or at least not in all Cases. And this puts me in Mind of the

*Second* thing Considerable in the Notion

Notion of Fate, *i. e.* what kind of Neceſſity or what degrees of it are ſuppos'd to render an Event Fatal? The *Stoics* did indeed think that the Neceſſity of Fate was uncontroulable, irreſiſtible, inevitable; thô I cannot deny but that the Opinion of *Chryſippus* and *Seneca* too (as he explains it ſomewhere in his Natural Queſtions concerning Fate, if placed in an advantageous Light wou'd look with a more pleaſing and favourable Aſpect upon the Liberty of Man; but let the *Stoics* think what they will, I do not find that others thought ſuch a Neceſſity as this alone, and nothing leſs ſufficient to make up Fate; for the *Egyptians* which ſuppos'd an Aſtrological Fate, or o're-ruling Influence of the Stars did yet believe that the Evil they threatned might be diverted by Prayers, Sacrifices and other Religious Rites, according to that of *Nemeſius*, Πρὸς δὲ τοὺς σόφους τῶν Αἰγυπτίων λέγοντας ἀληθεύεσθαι μὲν τὴν διὰ τῶν ἀστρῶν εἱμαρμένην, τρέπεσθαι δὲ αὐτὴν εὐχαῖς καὶ ἀποτροπιασμοῖς, εἴ γε τινὰς καὶ τούτων αὐτῶν τῶν ἀστέρων θεραπείας τὰς ὀκμειλισσομένας

*Nemeſ.* p. 252.

νας αὐτοῦς, καὶ ἄλλας τινὰς ὑπερκειμένας δυνάμεις τὰς τρέπειν αὐτοὺς δυναμένας, καὶ διὰ τούτο τὰς εὐχὰς καὶ τὰς θεραπείας τῶν Θεῶν καὶ τοὺς ἀποτροπιασμοὺς ἐπινενοέσθαι. Which is, *There are no Influences, no Aspects of Stars so froward and Malignant, so fatal and irresistible, but that Prayers and Expiations may sweeten and mitigate them, or else prevail with those Powers which govern them to divert their Menaces.* Besides this, the Distinction of Fate into Denunciative and Peremptory or Conditional, was very well known to the Heathens; this Last was a Fate whose Necessity depended upon some Antecedent Conditions, upon some Suppositions which might or might not be fulfill'd: This, *Servius* discourses largely of upon that place of *Virgil*:

*Nam quia nec Fato, meritâ nec morte peribat,*
*Sed misera ante Diem——*

*Before her Day fell the Unhappy Maid*
*By Love, not Fate, nor her own Crimes betray'd:*

Where

Where he that pleaſes may ſee many Inſtances of this Conditional Fate; and to come to an End, the Neceſſity of Fate in the opinion of *Ariſtotle* and *Epicurus*, if *Gaſſendus* repreſents it rightly, was not an inflexible, uncontroulable one, but one ſubject to Alteration and Change, to Chance and many Impediments, being nothing elſe but that Energy or Efficacy in Natural Bodies, which the Wiſdom of Man did often prevent, the Induſtry and Courage of Man did often maſter, and Chance did often hinder and over-rule. By all this we ſee plainly how careful the Heathens were, that the Neceſſity of Fate might not deſtroy the Liberty of Man, how earneſtly they contended for ſuch a Fatality of Events, as might not cancel Man's Obligation to Vertue, nor diſcourage him from the Expectation and Purſuit of Happineſs; for now to draw to a Point, and to make ſome uſe of this tedious Recital of the Pagan Notions of Fate: If we aſſert a *Stoical* Fate, we yet leave the Wiſe Man whatever Encouragements he can derive from the Rewards of another

life, and whatever Satisfaction he can derive from Vertue it self in this. And certainly thô temporal Events were Fatal without any Connexion to, or Dependence upon the Choice and Actions of Man; yet even on this Supposition, Vertue were eligible, as that which teaches us to enjoy Prosperity, and bear bravely that Adversity which we could not prevent: But if with other Philosophers we did believe, not only that the success of another life, but even that of this too, did depend wholly upon our behaviour, and that Events were therefore only Fatal, because those Decrees of God which did award Happiness to the Vertuous, and Misery to the Wicked, are fix't and immutable; then we could not desire more powerful Encouragements to Vertue, or more Evident proof that it is in our own Power to be Happy. If we grant the Necessity that makes up Fate flexible and mutable, or if we suspend a fatal Event upon Conditions, as it were but reasonable to imagine that all Evil ones are suspended: there will be no Reason to question whether Man's

Man's Happineſs be in his own Power. If we make the Neceſſity of a Denunciative Fate, which even Wiſdom and Vertue cannot ſurmount, extend it ſelf to ſome few things; and that Fate or Fortune, which drags only Fools and Sluggards in Chains after it, more general and univerſal, which is a Notion *Cælius Rodiginus* ſeems to have taken from the *Platonics*; we meet with nothing in all this which can rationally deter the Induſtry and Hopes of any Man. If laſtly, with *Ariſtotle* and *Epicurus*, we attribute no more force or ſtrength to Fate, than to that Efficacy of Natural Cauſes, which we experience every Day, is not irreſiſtible (for the Mind over-comes thoſe Inclinations we derive from Natural Temper, and life may be lengthen'd or ſhortned by Temperance or Luxury, it being a flame which is not of it ſelf ſo inextinguiſhable, but that it requires our Care to cheriſh it, and barren Grounds may be improv'd and cultivated, *&c.*) then nothing is more Evident than that it behoves us to act like Men, ſince our Reaſon and Vertue have their

*Cælius Rodiginus*, l. x. c. 20.

their Neceſſary tendency and efficacy as well as any other natural Cauſes; and ſince the Concurrence of our Endeavours may ſo much more properly be ſuppos'd Neceſſary to promote our Happineſs than the Influence of Stars, as it has a more direct and immediate operation upon our Affairs, than the Motion of thoſe Heavenly Bodies can have. And now who would expect to find that Fate in the Chriſtian which was baniſh't the Pagan World? who would expect that the Mind of Man ſhould be fetter'd and bound by a more inexorable and deplorable Neceſſity now in this Age of *Light* and *Grace*, than ever it was in the thickeſt Darkneſs of Paganiſm? who cou'd now believe that Man's Eternal ſucceſs, in another life, ſhould be as Fatal as ever the Stoic did believe his Temporal one in this? or who could ever imagine that Chriſtians would Charge that upon the Decrees of a Wiſe and Good God, which the Heathens out of their Honour for him, did ever refuſe to do? for thoſe of them who made Fate entirely the Decree of God did believe that

that in the Diſpenſation of Evils God did wholly regard Men's Crimes and Sins, that there was no other Fate attended any Man than what he was himſelf the Author of. And they who did believe a Fatality of Events without any dependence upon the Behaviour of Man, did impute it to *Matter*, not to God, to the deficiency of the one, not to the *Will* of the other.

'Tis true, ſuch a Fate is not to be found in the Scriptures, as we ſhall ſee anon; nor is it to be found in the Fathers of the Church, we may find *Juſtin Martyr*, *Tertullian*, *Lactantius*, and St. *Auſtin* himſelf, (however accus'd by ſome as a Fataliſt) zealouſly Diſputing againſt the Pagan Fate: what would they have done, had there been then ſuch a Notion of Fate, as has ſince prevail'd amongſt ſome Chriſtians, which is briefly this, That the Eternal miſery of Nineteen Parts of the World, (I ſpeak modeſtly) and the Eternal Happineſs of the Twentieth, is Fatal; that the means conducing to theſe Ends are Fatal; the one being ſhut up under the invincible Neceſſity of *Natural Impotence*,

*Impotence*, and *Rejection from ſufficient Grace*: the other being called and acted by *Grace*, *Irreſiſtible*. That this Neceſſity of Fate is the Reſult of a Divine Decree, That this Decree proceeded from mere Arbitrary *Will*, without any regard to the Behaviour of Man, they that cried out againſt the Pagan Fate, that it ſubverted Humane life, that it defeated all Laws, that it left Man no uſe of his Reaſon, that it left no place for rational Hopes or Fears, with what bitter invectives muſt they needs have aſſaulted this Fate? the Pagan Fate left the *Will* free, this bound and fetter'd, not only bereav'd of Natural Power and Liberty (for we contend not about that) but deſtitute of Grace and Divine Aſſiſtance: The Pagan Fate in the Opinion of a great many, if not moſt. did not teach a rigid and inflexible *Neceſſity*, this doth: they amongſt the Pagans who taught the Neceſſity of Fate inexorable, underſtood it of *Neceſſity* in Temporal Events, but this Fate extends it to Eternal ones. The *Stoic* the great Aſſertor of Fate acknowledg'd, nay, eagerly contended,

contended, that Man might be Vertuous and Happy in deſpight of Fate, but theſe Men make humane Happineſs and Vertue the very Object of their Fate, making Sin and Miſery, Vertue and Happineſs as Fatal as any Events whatever. In vain now ſhall any one of 'em think to excuſe their Doctrine from the Imputation of Fate, by telling us (as * ſome do) that Fate in the Pagan Notion did involve God as well as Man within the Compaſs of its Neceſſity; that what they teach, is nothing elſe but God's voluntary Decree: this is a miſerable ſhift, for this doth not at all lighten the weight of that Fatal *Neceſſity* that lies upon unhappy Man, to think that God is not ſubject to the ſame: Nay, on the quite contrary, the Pagan Notion was more eaſie to the Mind, and whil'ſt it freed God from the guilt of Man's Ruine, it frees Man from all hard and irreligious thoughts of God.

* *Calvin. brevis Reſponſio, &c. in Præf.*

*Numina cùm videas diris obnoxia Fatis*
*Invidiâ poſſis exonerare Deos.* Mart.

*Since*

*Since Heavenly Powers to Curs't Fate subject be,*
*The Gods you cannot but from Envy free.*

It was pure Piety in the *Stoic*, to impute that Fatality of Event, which he thought independent of the good or ill-behaviour of Man, to any thing rather than to God, what Impiety!—— But I have done, I have sufficiently consider'd which way the stream of Authority runs, and it evidently appears to be against all such Notions of Fate, as put it out of a Man's Power to be Virtuous and Happy, and determine his Sin and Misery wholly *Necessary* and unavoidable. I will now proceed to consider,

*Reason and Revelation against Fate.*

*Secondly*, What plain Reason and as plain Revelation do dictate in this point. Thou dost believe Fate, and therefore dost despair of Happiness; Thy sense must be plainly this, All is in the Power of Fate, nothing in thine own, there is nothing in thee to do that can contribute to make thee Vertuous or Happy. Whence can this *Necessity*,

*ceſſity*, this Fate proceed? there are but two Principles that were ever fancied to be the firſt Cauſes of all things, *God* and *Matter*. Doſt thou believe this Neceſſity proceeds from Matter, from the Motion of Atoms, or the Influence of Stars? This belief as St. *Auſtin* argues, doth ſubvert the Foundation of all Religion, for he who believes that he depends upon Fate not God, can have no ſufficient Reaſon for the Worſhip of that God, on whom he hath no Dependence: but this is that peradventure thou wouldſt have; well, when thou art able to prove Reaſon and Underſtanding to derive themſelves from ſenſeleſs Atoms, when thou can'ſt find out any kind of Natural Motion of Matter or Atoms, which can be the Cauſe of Liberty or Freedom in the *Will*, any Motion that can at once be Neceſſary (for ſo all Motion of Atoms muſt, be it of what kind it will) and yet free too, for ſuch all my Deliberations and all my Choices I make, prove the Motion of the Mind to be, then I will acknowledge a Fate, not only independent from, but

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if thou wilt, Superiour to God; then I will forbear all farther attempts of Charity, as vain, and leave thee to thy Fate and Misery: But these are Notions so absurd in themselves, that no Similitudes, no Arguments, can make 'em appear one jot more ridiculous or irrational than they do to all Men of sense at the first hearing. There are some Errors as well as Truths that are self-evident, there needs no Demonstration to convince us that the one are Errors, and the other Truths, and of this kind are the Errors we are speaking of; if a Man should assert that Death is the Original of Life, that senseless *Matter* gives Being to an Understanding Mind, that Necessity is the Parent of Liberty and such like, it were an unpardonable weakness in any Man to think, that such assertion did stand in need of a laborious Confutation. But there are who suppose God the Author of all things, and yet suppose Events fatal too, the former Opinion was ridiculous, this is impious; for suppose Mankind fatally guided by the Influence of the Stars, and these Stars

to

to have received this Power and Energy from God, is it not natural for every Man to break out into the words of St. *Auſtin*, *Illi verò qui poſitionem Stellarum quodammodo decernentium qualis quiſq; ſit, & quid ei proveniat boni, quidve mali accidat, ex Dei voluntate ſuſpendunt, ſi eaſdem ſtellas putant habere hanc poteſtatem traditam ſibi à ſummâ illius poteſtate, ut volentes iſta decernant, magnam Cœlo faciunt Injuriam: in Cujus velut Clariſſimo ſenatu ac Splendidiſſima Curiâ ſcelera facienda decerni, qualia ſi aliqua terrena Civitas decreviſſet, genere humano decernente fuerat evertenda. How outragiouſly do theſe Men reproach Heaven whilſt they believe thoſe Crimes and Villanies decreed by that Auguſt Senate and glorious Court in Heaven, which had any City upon Earth decreed, it had deſerv'd to have been damn'd by the Common Vote, and raz'd to the ground by the united Arms of Mankind.* When I conſider that the Stars are the Work of God, that their Order and Motion was preſcrib'd by him, that whatever Vigour and Efficacy they have, they have received

Aug. de C. D. l. 5. c. 1.

ceived it from him; and then Remember that God is a moſt infinitely kind and good Being; I ſhou'd eaſily ſuffer my ſelf to be perſwaded that they could ſhed no influence upon this lower World. but what were extreamly beneficial to it, that they could have no Aſpects but what were favourable and benign: I could eaſily believe that all the Inclinations they form in the Body (if they form any) could be no other than Innocent and Vertuous; I can never believe that Luſt or Falſhood, Malice or Cruelty can come down from above; or that our Minds ſhould be impregnated with Sin and Folly by the Influences of Heaven. No certainly, if there be any Vertue in the Stars that extends it ſelf to Man, it muſt rather be the ſeed of Life, and Health, and Vertue; than of Diſeaſes, Death or Vice. I can eaſily fall in with the opinion of thoſe Learned Men in *Cælius Rhodiginus*, who thought that that Vertue of Cœleſtial Bodies, which tended of it ſelf to excellent Ends, was marred and perverted by a vitious Education. And ſo the Gravity of *Saturn* did

*Antiq. Lect.* l. x. c. 20.

did degenerate into Sullenneſs, Niggardlineſs and Melancholy. The Magnanimity of *Mars* into Raſhneſs and Fool-hardineſs. The Sharpneſs and Sagacity of *Mercury* into miſchievous Craft and deceitful Subtilty. The Sweetneſs and Gentleneſs of *Venus* into filthy Luſt, and ſo on: And this Thought does well become every one that pretends to any Religion, whether Revealed or Natural; for this is Conſonant to the excellency of the Divine Nature; But this ſort of Fate ſpringing from the Influence of any Natural Bodies, is not only repugnant to Reaſon, but to our Senſe and Experience: for nothing is more plain than this, that any ſuch Influence cannot affect the Mind, but through the Body, and we do frequently find our Reaſon aſſerting its Power and Dominion againſt all the force and ſtrength of the Body: Nor doth Reaſon only but in every Nation, Law and Cuſtom triumph over the ſtrongeſt Inclinations of Nature. As the Innocence of the *Seres*, the Chaſtity of thoſe in *Arabia* and *Oſroene*, the Abſtinence of the *Brachmans*, and numerous

merous Instances which he that pleases may see in *Bardesanes* the *Syrian*, and others, does abundantly manifest, that their manners are the Effects not of the Influence of those Planets that Rule their Birth, but of those Laws and Customs that Rule their Countrey. Since therefore that *Necessity* which our Natural Tempers and Inclinations do impose upon the Mind, is the utmost Fate that we can imagine to proceed from the Influence of any Natural Bodies, 'tis Nonsense to suppose that Fate insuperable or incontroulable which we see baffled and defeated every day, and in every Nation.

The sum of those Reasons I have offer'd against Fate is this, If we make God the Author of it, we impiously Charge him with what is repugnant to his Nature, for a Good God cannot be the Cause of Man's Sin and Misery: if *Matter*, we ridiculously suppose, that what is it self senseless and inanimate should produce and govern a Being endow'd with *Life*, *Understanding* and *Liberty*: If the Stars, we run again into the same absurdities; for if they have

have their fatal Influence from God, then properly ſpeaking, God is the Author, they but the Inſtrument of our Fate. If from themſelves, then our Dependence on, and Worſhip of God is vain, and beſides we abſurdly ſubject the Reaſon and the Liberty of the Mind of Man to the ſenſeleſs Tyranny of Atoms. If from the Conſideration of the Cauſes of Fate we deſcend to examine what our Experience teaches us, what common ſenſe informs us, each of 'em bears witneſs to the Soveraignty and Liberty of the Mind of Man. If we ſhou'd come in the laſt place to Examine what wou'd be the Conſequences of a Fatal *Neceſſity* over-ruling Man and Humane Affairs, they are ſuch as are not only groſly Contradictious in themſelves, but Fatal and Deſtructive both to the public and private Good of Mankind. 'Tis true, were the Liberty of doing Evil taken from Man, we ſhou'd have no Reaſon to complain, for then there wou'd be nothing wanting to make the ſtate of Man Happy as that of Angels, but Immortality: But to bereave Man of all Power to do good,

to neceſſitate and compel him to be wicked, how dreadful are the Effects which muſt follow this? he that ſtains his hands in the Blood of his Soveraign or his Parent, will accuſe his Stars not himſelf; he that pollutes himſelf in the inceſtuous Embraces of a Mother or a Daughter, may defend his action as his Fate not Choice; and how readily ſhall we do all that Rage or Luſt invites us to, when there is an Excuſe prepar'd for all we do? for he is no more blameable who commits the Evil which he could not help, than he is worthy of Praiſe who did the Good which he could not forbear. Were it true, that whatever miſchief Man did, he were neceſſitated to do, we might with more Juſtice arraign the Stars and Atoms, than Malefactors; and all the Inſtruments of Miſchief would be every jot as Guilty and Criminal, as the Man that us'd them. Were this true we might as properly betake our ſelves to *Magic* and *Inchantments*, as to Advices and Exhortations, when we wou'd reclaim the vicious; nor yet could the one be more Effectual than

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the other; for what could alter what is unalterable? and for the ſame Reaſon, we might forbear our Sacrifices and Prayers, ſince what will be, muſt be, and cannot be otherwiſe.

*Deſine Fata Deûm flecti ſperare precando.*

*You ſtrive in vain with Prayers to move*
*The inexorable Fates above.*

Repentance and Tears may be what *Seneca* calls Expiation on this Suppoſition *Ægræ mentis ſolatia, The deluding Dreams of a ſuperſtitious Mind*; but could never procure us any real Advantage; ſo that on this Suppoſition, what is now thought the only Wiſdom, would be then the only Folly of a Sinner, *Repentance*. I think I may conclude here, for if it be not by this time Evident, whether Reaſon be for or againſt Fate, we may juſtly deſpair of diſcovering what Reaſon dictates in this or any other Queſtion. I will now proceed to Examine,

What plain Text of Scripture ſpeaks in this Point. And here in the firſt place we are to expect no other Fate than what depends upon God, for the Scripture makes all things derive their Original from him, and all things depend upon him, there is but one Creator, and one Lord, and therefore the Creature can be ſubject to no Laws but ſuch as he Enacts; ſo that whatever Fate we now lye under, muſt be imputed to the voluntary Decree of God. Is then the Eternal Ruine of Man Fatal and unavoidable? If we enquire into the Original of this Unhappy Neceſſity, it muſt be ultimately reſolv'd into the Divine Will; when God then decreed the inevitable Ruine of Man, under what Notion did he conſider his Ruine? under that of *Miſery*? or that of *Puniſhment*? If under the Notion of Puniſhment, this Implies plainly, that we are to thank our ſelves for our Ruine: for Puniſhment is nothing elſe but the Infliction of that Miſery which our Sin and Folly have deſerv'd. But if under the Notion of Miſery, how can this conſiſt with the Infinite

Infinite Goodneſs or Wiſdom of God? Alas! how Contradictory is this to Scripture? there God ſwears that he delights not in the Death of a *Sinner*, This Decree would ſuppoſe him to delight in the Death of the *Innocent*: there he is repreſented *full of Compaſſion*, and *ſlow to wrath*, even upon repeated Provocations, this Decree repreſents him ſo addicted to Wrath, and Cruelty, that he made a World on purpoſe to have whereon to exerciſe it, and doth exerciſe it merely for the delight he takes in it; The Scripture finally repreſents him full of Divine love for Mankind, and not only not deſirous that they ſhould periſh, but extreamly deſirous that they ſhould be partakers of Everlaſting life; this Decree ſuppoſes him ſo utter an Enemy to, and hater of Mankind, that he made the far greater part to no other End, but only to make 'em miſerable. Let any unprejudiced Man judge now, whether this be not as Contradictory to Scripture as it is to Senſe: Nor is it poſſible that any unprejudic'd Man ſhould look into Holy Writ, and not diſcern

discern evidently that Man's Ruine is the Effect of Sin, not only wilfully and presumptuously Committed, but also obstinately and impenitently persisted in: and that God is so far from being fond of our Sufferings and Calamities, that he is ever and anon bewailing the Disappointment of his Love, the defeat of his Grace and Mercy by our Obstinacy and Impenitence: it is the voice of his Son, 'tis the voice of God. *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the Prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee: how often would I have gather'd thy Children together, even as a Hen gathers her Chickens under her wings, and ye would not!* If therefore we desire to know what the Will of God is, with respect to Man, this is a full and plain Declaration of it; there can be no other, much less any Contradictory to this, if I may not confidently rely upon this Declaration of the Divine *Will*, there is no reveal'd Truth that I can depend upon; Nor can Revelation stand us in any stead, for nothing can be asserted with greater perspicuity or stronger Asseveration.

Matth. 23.

tion. But I have no Scruples in me about this Matter, I have no Fears nor Jealouſies of any ſecret Decree or Latent *Will* repugnant to his declar'd one; I am as ſure that God is *Good* and *True* as that he is Eternal or Almighty: and were he not, we could reap but very little Comfort from all his other Attributes how great or glorious ſoever in themſelves. But bleſſed be God, if we proceed from examining thoſe Declarations of his *Will*, which God has made us to examine the Manner and Method of his Government as it relates to Mankind (which is another and the only way left us to judge of his Will and Decrees) we ſhall find no Inſtance in the whole Series of Divine Diſpenſations, which can create in us the leaſt Suſpition of lying under an Arbitrary and Tyrannical Fate; nay, if we conſider the Acts of Divine Providence, we ſhall find the quite Contrary, that God ſo governs the World, that the Iſſues of things are not fatal and unavoidable, but dependent upon our ſelves, that God is free, Man free, and the Events of things free from any inevitable

table Neceſſity; God indeed is ever bound to do what is beſt, what is wiſeſt, and can do no otherwiſe; This is the only Fate that God is ſubject to; But a poſſibility of Different Events is no way repugnant to his Wiſdom, Juſtice, or Goodneſs. In a proper ſenſe therefore there is no Fate above him, that can impoſe a Neceſſity upon him, nor does he impoſe any upon himſelf: if there were in any part of his Government, a fatal and a peremptory Neceſſity, we ſhould certainly find the tracks and footſteps of it amongſt inanimate and ſenſitive Beings: how great a Liberty does God make uſe of in this part of his Government; The Sun, whoſe Courſe ſeems certain and invariable as the Imaginary Laws of Fate, ſhall if need be, ſtand ſtock ſtill, or what is more, move backwards towards it's Eaſt. An inſtance of both we read of in Scripture, when God thought fit to execute his Judgments upon the *Amorites*, and condeſcended to give *Hezekiah* a miraculous Aſſurance of his Mercy: The fire ſhall not exert its natural Heat, but ſhall ceaſe to

Joſh. x.

2 Kings 20.

to burn and conſume, and when he ſees fit (as in the caſe of the three Children) become as harmleſs as the morning light: The Waters ſhall ceaſe to flow as did the Red Sea, when the Army of *Iſrael* march't through it, and ſaw with horrour and delight, the rowling Waves ſtand fix't and unmov'd, as the Rocks and Shores that bounded them; and yet what Neceſſity, what Fate can we conceive more immutable, what ever Connexion of Natural Cauſes it be produc't by, than that which makes the Sun move, the Fire burn, the Water flow? If we conſider his Government of Kingdoms, where if any where the Periods and Revolutions of Miſery and Proſperity ſhould ſeem Fatal and immutable; here again we ſhall find the footſteps of unqueſtionable Liberty: Let us for Inſtance conſider God's Government of the *Jews*, what are the Laws which God obliges himſelf to obſerve towards them; *If ye walk in my Statutes, and keep my Commandments and do them; then I will give you rain in due Seaſon, and the Land ſhall yield her increaſe;* Dan. 3. Levit. 26. 3, 4, &c.

*and*

*and the trees of the field shall yield their Fruit. And your threshing shall reach unto the Vintage, and the Vintage shall reach unto the sowing time; and ye shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your Land safely*, &c. *But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these Commandments. And if ye shall despise my Statutes, or if your Soul abhor my Judgments, so that you will not do all my Commandments, but that ye break my Covenant. I also will do this unto you; I will even appoint over you Terrour, Consumption, and the burning Ague that shall consume the Eyes and cause sorrow of Heart: and ye shall sow your seed in vain, for your Enemies shall eat it*, &c. Doth not God here lay Life and Death, Good and Evil before 'em? is not the one and the other to be the Effect of their own Choice, their own behaviour? are we not reasonably to suppose the *Israelites* at the time of entring into that Covenant, whereof these are the Sanctions, as capable of Happiness, as they were of Misery? what was finally the Issue of things? the *Jews* rebelled and revolted

And 14, 15, 16, &c.

volted from God, and as he threatned they were harraſſed and exhauſted by continual Plagues and Puniſhments. Well, did this happen ſo, becauſe it could not happen otherwiſe? was this the Event, the fatal Event of things which God did really *Will*, and immutably and peremptorily reſolve from the beginning, notwithſtanding whatever Profeſſions he might make of his ſincere deſire of the welfare and proſperity of that People? Let God himſelf be the Judge, who beſt underſtands his own Mind. *O that my People had hearken'd to me, and Iſrael had walk't in my ways! I ſhould ſoon have ſubdued their Enemies, and turn'd my hand againſt their Adverſaries: the haters of the Lord ſhould have ſubmitted themſelves unto him, but their time ſhould have endur'd for ever.* By this ſure, if we can judge of the meaning of God by any of his Expreſſions, we may ſafely conclude, not only that the Obedience and Proſperity of *Iſrael* were things poſſible, and conſequently their Diſobedience and Ruine was not fatal; but alſo that their obedience and proſperity were the Pſal. 81.

things

things which God did moſt heartily and ſincerely deſire If we come to God's Government of particular Men, we may be ſure that this is of a piece with his Government of Mankind or Kingdoms, it being nothing elſe but a more particular Application of thoſe Univerſal Laws of Wiſdom, Goodneſs, and Juſtice by which he Rules: An Inſtance of Liberty in Temporal Events, we meet with in that Voyage which St. *Luke* deſcribes *Acts* 27. Verſe the Tenth, we have St. *Paul* foretelling the Fate that was like to attend themſelves and their Ship, if they purſued the Voyage they had reſolved on: *Verſe* 19. we meet with the Accompliſhment in part, of his Prediction, Darkneſs and Horror invades 'em, Seas break in upon 'em, and at the ſame breach had Death entred, had not Divine Providence interpos'd in favour, and at the Requeſt of St. *Paul*. Was this their Suffering fatal? was it unavoidable? had they not eſcaped the Tempeſt, if they had believed St. *Paul*, and not departed from *Crete*? or was their obſtinacy or unbelief as fatal as the

Acts 27.

the Danger and Damage which attended it? The Expoſtulation of St. *Paul*, *Ver.* 21. will eaſily clear this Doubt, *Ye ſhould have hearkened unto me, and not have loos'd from* Crete, *and to have gain'd this harm and loſs.* What then! Shall we think the Iſſues of Eternity fatal, when thoſe of time wherein we are comparatively ſo little concern'd are free? Shall God not only leave us the uſe of our Reaſon, but alſo aſſiſt us by the Aid of his Providence for the avoiding temporal Evils, and will he allow us neither for the avoiding of Eternal ones? muſt temporal Ruine be the Effect only of our ſinful Choice and Obſtinacy, Eternal Ruine the Effect not of our Folly or Sin, but *Fate*? No ſurely, how often do we find God in the *Revelation* reſpiting his final Sentence, and giving Men ſpace and time to repent? but they repented not: 'tis true, and this was their Obſtinacy, not their Fate; for if Repentance had been impoſſible, to what purpoſe did God allow 'em time for't? that they might fill up the Meaſure of their Iniquity: an excellent Paraphraſe! whom ſhall

I believe? God ſaith, he gave the *Sinner* time to *Repent*; thou ſay'ſt he gave him time to *Sin*: God ſays, he gave him time to make himſelf capable of Mercy; thou ſay'ſt, he gave him time only to increaſe his Guilt and Puniſhment: How cruel are the Mercies of ſome Men! this is juſt ſuch a Grace or Favour as griping Uſurers vouchſafe the careleſs Debtor, whoſe Fortune and Eſtate they would ſwallow up and devour.

I have now I hope diſpers'd thoſe Clouds which ſeem'd to hover over our heads big with Storm and Ruine; I mean thoſe melancholy Imaginations which ſcare and terrifie the weak and ſuperſtitious Minds of Men: we may now boldly purſue, and poſſeſs our ſelves of Happineſs; the way to it is open, there is no cruel Deity, no ſpiteful Fortune, no inexorable Fate that will oppoſe us; there is no God but one of Love and Goodneſs, which moderate his Almighty Power, and temper the Severity of his Juſtice; a God who paſſionately deſires our Happineſs, and delights in nothing more than in promoting

moting it; All is lightſom and chearful where he is, Perfection and Happineſs dwell with him, *in his preſence is fulneſs of Joy, and at his right hand are Pleaſures for evermore.* Pſal. 16. He ſcatters and diſſipates Evil, and troubles by the Light of his Countenance, Death and Hell fly far from before him, and hide themſelves in their own Darkneſs. What can we apprehend from ſuch a God as this is! how can he delight in our Miſery who is all *Love!* No, nothing but our guilt or folly can raiſe our Fears, we may reſt ſecure of his Favour, if we do not deſpiſe it; nor can he ever be made our Enemy, unleſs we firſt become the Enemies of Vertue and Goodneſs: what then have we to fear? there is no Fate but the immutable Law of God, that Univerſal Law which adjudges Happineſs to the Righteous and Miſery to the Wicked: there is no Fortune but his Providence; which is nothing but the Execution of that one general Law, and the Application of its ſeveral parts, in particular Inſtances: 'tis plain therefore we have nothing now to fear but our ſelves, if

we be but true to our own Reaſon, and faithful to our own Intereſt, we may confidently preſume both of the Aſſiſtance and Reward of Heaven; there is therefore nothing left now to excuſe us from the guilt of our own Ruine; but only that which is wont to be objected by ſuch as are enſlav'd to ſome impious Luſt, and groan under the weight of thoſe Chains which they made themſelves, I mean an Incapacity of Happineſs, which is a fourth Objection againſt the poſſibility of Attaining Happineſs, and is now to be conſider'd.

*Obj. 4. Incapacity of Happineſs.*

They who urge their Incapacity as an Objection againſt the poſſibility of attaining Happineſs do ſuppoſe Happineſs to conſiſt in Vertue in the Pleaſure that flows from it, and the bliſs that will one Day or other Eternally reward it: they acknowledge, could they but be Vertuous, they ſhould be Happy; but they deſpair of obtaining ſuch a Conqueſt over their Vices as may ſuffice to render their life ſmooth, equal and ſteady; and preſerve the Peace of their Conſcience by giving

'em

'em an unqueſtionable proof of their Sincerity towards God; without which 'tis impoſſible that they ſhould be fill'd with a rational Joy and Peace, or abound in a rational Hope. This therefore muſt be the ſuppoſition of my following Diſcourſe.

There may be three different kinds of Incapacities fancied, which for Diſtinction ſake I'le call *Natural*, *Moral*, and *Penal*: each of which may be thus explain'd in the Notion the Objector forms of 'em: *Penal* Incapacity is that deſperate ſtate wherein Man is by God immutably rejected both from Pardon and Aſſiſtance. *Moral* Incapacity reſults from the Strength and Abſoluteneſs of that Dominion which Sin has eſtabliſh't over ſome Men, through a long and continued courſe of Wickedneſs. *Natural* Incapacity conſiſts in ſuch an inteachable ſtupidity of Temper, or in ſuch violent and invincible Inclinations to Vice, or in ſuch a ſlightneſs, levity and inconſtancy of Mind, as render Men utterly unfit to receive any laſting Impreſſions of Vertue, or to make any ſteady and reſolute At-

*No Incapacity from Nature.*

tempt of attaining it. I'le begin with this first, and here I desire to be excus'd if I do not take upon me to mark out the distinct bounds and limits of *Nature* and *Grace*; These two Sisters are not like those *Chaldee* Brethren * *Abraham* and *Lot*, that were too mighty to dwell together. No, they delight to mix in loving Embraces, their Wealth and Power encreases by being United; and like some Plants I have read of, they never thrive when divided: I shall not dispute, what Power in Man is a Birthright, what a Donative; for alas! Every thing he possesses is a Grace, a Favour of his Prince: his Natural Abilities are so many Graces he derives from God, and as properly such as any accession to 'em which is inspir'd afterwards: So that when ever I contend that any thing is in the Power of Man, I desire to be understood of all that Power which God has invested him with, whether Natural or Supernatural.

* Gen. 13.

Did Men decry and vilifie Nature, to beget in themselves the more profound Humility, and the more wakeful and solici-

ſolicitous Induſtry, did they like the *Semnones*, in * *Tacitus*, load themſelves with Chains as the Badge of their ſubjection to and dependence upon the Deity, did they magnifie Divine Grace, in order to convince themſelves of the Neceſſity and Efficacy of it, and ſo to enflame their Importunity and Induſtry in Queſt of it; This were Piety and Devotion, not Error; or however they might exaggerate the Impotence of Nature beyond ſtrict Truth, yet this wou'd be a Safe and Pious Errour, as all humble and modeſt ones are: But when they Endeavour to repreſent Nature vile and corrupt, on purpoſe that they may the more licentiouſly pollute and abuſe it, when they magnifie and exalt Divine Grace out of a moſt contradictious and prepoſterous Deſign to juſtifie their Neglect and Contempt of it, for they wou'd fain have all to be ſo intirely imputed to Grace, that they wou'd not themſelves be put to as much as the trouble of ſeeking it, 'tis not only an Error, but a pernicious and fatal one: for he that abandons the uſe of his Reaſon, renders himſelf incapa-

* *Morib. German.*

ble of any Heavenly aid; God gives his Grace to Men, not Beasts; I must therefore oppose this Fancy and Endeavour to perswade Men, that it is in their Power to be Virtuous and Happy: Nor can I think this Assertion any way injurious to the Honour or Goodness of God, if it be remembred, that whatever Power I attribute to Man, I acknowledge deriv'd from God. I will therefore with good Assurance proceed and try whether I cannot take in and demolish this Fort which stops our way to Happiness.

They who affirm a great part of Mankind incapable of Vertue, forget that they dishonour God whilst they reproach their Nature: for were it so, To what End could we imagine such Men endow'd with Reason and Understanding? not to worship but defie their Maker? and was it for this End that they were made immortal too? had God made Man only to take his Pastime in the World, like the *Leviathan* in the Waves, such a Soul as that which moves the Fish of the Sea, or the Beasts of the Earth, a Sensitive Soul

Soul had been moſt proper for this End; Then might he have enjoy'd himſelf without Reluctancy, without Controul, without Remorſe, without Shame: what can be the proper work of a rational Creature, to which you allow not a Capacity of Vertue and Religion? till you can ſhew me this, I can never believe that God ſhou'd endow Man with a Rational and Immortal Mind out of any other Deſign than ſuch a one as might become ſuch a Being Created after his own Image, which is the Practice of Holineſs and Vertue. But what ſhou'd I wonder that Men ſhou'd not be aware of their contradicting Reaſon when they ſeem to be inſenſible of that Contradiction even to the common Senſe and Experience of Mankind which they are guilty of? To what purpoſe are there ſo many Schools of Learning and good Manners founded? To what purpoſe are there ſo many Treatiſes of the Education of Youth writ? To what purpoſe does the wakeful Parent ſtrive to inculcate the Seeds of Vertue into the Child, and train him up by a wiſe Diſcipline to the

the Practice and Cuſtom of Vertue? To what purpoſe is the propoſal of Rewards and Puniſhments, and the Reſtraint of Laws, if either they do not raiſe thoſe Hopes and Fears they aim at, or if Hopes and Fears be altogether uſeleſs and ineffectual, if no Inſtruction no Diſcipline can mould and faſhion rough, unpoliſh't, crooked, incorrigible Nature? Now here thô any Man might have confidence enough to diſparage the judgment of Mankind, and attribute all the Pains they take in the Education of Youth, or the Government and Direction of riper Years, to Cuſtom not to right Reaſon; yet ſurely he wou'd not ſo far diſparage his own Obſervation and Knowledge as utterly to deny the ſucceſs of theſe means; for not to inſtance in particulars, 'tis not unknown to any one the leaſt vers'd in the Hiſtory of the World, that there have been National Vertues as well as Vices, That there have been times wherein Learning and Religion have been as much in Faſhion and Reputation, as Wickedneſs and Barbariſm in others, ſhall we ſay, thoſe Nations,

Nations, thoſe times bred none of thoſe Natures, which the Objector affirms are uncapable of Vertue? Let 'em ſhew what Heavenly Influences, what miraculous Power produc'd this Change in Nature: what ſhou'd I urge the Power of vain and falſe principles, the mighty force even of irrational Cuſtoms, vanquiſhing thoſe Inclinations which are more deeply rooted, more cloſely interwove with our Blood and Spirits than any Inclination to Vice and Folly can be? Such are for Example the love of Life, and the Abhorrence of Pain; and yet what a Contempt of Death is to be found even in the moſt timorous Sex, as in the *Indian* Women! what a Contempt of Pain even in the weakeſt Age, as in the *Spartan* Youth! And all this having no ſtronger Foundation than irrational Cuſtom, and vain Phantaſtic Principles: why ſhou'd we therefore be unwilling to attribute to excellent Principles and vertuous Cuſtoms, bleſſed and aided by Heaven, as much Power and Vertue as we do to ſuch as theſe? if the Natural tendencies of Man to wickedneſs can be curbed,

curbed, if his moſt furious and violent Paſſions can be reſtrain'd and ſtifled, then I think, it may be as reaſonably ſuppos'd that Divine Truths, Religious Diſcipline, together with the Grace of God may effect this, as any thing elſe whatever. If the preſſing Neceſſities and Perplexities of the State could change the ſoftneſs and luxury of *Otho* into Military Hardſhip and Courage; I know not why a rational ſenſe of the true Honour and Glory of Vertue, and of our Eternal Intereſt, and innumerable other Conſiderations which the Goſpel lays before us Chriſtians, ſhou'd not be able to work the ſame wonders? if the Reverence of *Seneca* or the Senate, or any other Motive could produce a *Quinquennium Neronis*, could reſtrain the violent Inclinations of that wretched Man, ſo that his Government for ſo many years, ſhould be as gentle and juſt as that of the moſt Gracious and Vertuous Princes, why ſhould not the Reverence of God and the Terrors of Eternity be able to awe and curb the moſt vicious Nature? This methinks ought well to be weigh'd

weigh'd by all who aſſert Man's Impotence and Incapacity of Vertue, they diſparage the Goſpel and reproach Grace as well as Man with Impotence and Inſufficiency; and yet both the one and the other is the Power of God, and that in order to Salvation: do you Conſider, that if you ſuppoſe Man by Nature unable to do any thing that is Good, and then deny him, and utterly debar him from God's Grace, you introduce Fate? for what more fatal Neceſſity can a wretched Creature lie under than *Natural Impotence* utterly deſtitute and for ever forſaken of Divine Aſſiſtance? or if you bereave not Man of Grace, but yet bereave Grace of *its Sufficiency*, do you not underſtand that the fatal Neceſſity continues ſtill the ſame? there is no Change in the Man's Condition, only in this Hypotheſis, Grace is diſhonoured and reproach't as well as Nature: and this reflects very rudely too upon God, it calls the Wiſdom, the Goodneſs, the Sincerity, the Power of God into Diſpute: 'tis inconſiſtent with the *Power* of God not to be able by his Spirit and Truth

Truth to ſubdue and over-power the Corruptions of Nature; 'tis Inconſiſtent with his *Goodneſs*, not to be willing to aid his poor Creatures, when they call upon him; inconſiſtent with his *Sincerity* to afford 'em ſuch aid as muſt tend to their greater miſchief not good, as Grace its ſelf wou'd, if it were only ſufficient to increaſe their Guilt, but not to ſubdue their Sin: This were indeed *when a Child ask't Bread to give him a Stone, and when he ask't Fiſh to gie him a Scorpion.* 'Tis laſtly, as inconſiſtent with the *Wiſdom* of God to confer Grace to no purpoſe, as it was with his Goodneſs to conſer it to an ill one. Theſe with many others are the abſurd Conſequences which attend the Denyal of the *Univerſality* or *Sufficiency* of Grace; but if on the other hand, we do grant that God Almighty is ready to aſſiſt every Man who calls on him in his Endeavours after Vertue and Happineſs, and that his Aſſiſtance is ſufficient to the End, for which 'tis deſign'd; then we muſt needs acknowledge that 'tis in every Man's Power to be Good and Happy: for 'tis no more

Matth. 7.

more than to acknowledge that Man can do what he can do, or which is all one, what God has put in his Power to do. By what a croud of Arguments might I confirm this Truth, ſufficient to bear down and even ſhame the moſt impudent Caviller? why are not Men Good? why are they not Happy? ſhall we ſay that God doth not Vouchſafe 'em his Grace? ſhall we impute Men's miſery to God? ſhall we charge that glorious and moſt perfect Being with want of Compaſſion or Sincerity towards his poor Creatures? how eaſie will it be for him to appeal to the ſufferings of his Son; to the vigorous Attempts and Endeavours of his Spirit; to Heaven and Earth ſtamp't with the Impreſs of his *Power* and *Goodneſs*, on purpoſe to teach, invite and almoſt compel us to worſhip and obey him; to the various Methods of his Providences contriving and purſuing our Happineſs? How eaſily laſtly may he appeal for his Purgation to our own Conſciences? And theſe will tell us, as they ever do, in the Diſtreſſes of our Fortune, and the Approaches of Danger

ger and Death to what we are to impute the Cauſe of our Ruine: what ſhall we ſay then? doth God vouchſafe Men his Grace, the Revelation of his Truth, and the Aſſiſtances of his Spirit, but that this Grace is not ſufficient for us? Alas! how eaſie were it for any of us to refute this Fancy by appealing to the ſolemn Covenant of our Baptiſm, to the Characters and Deſcriptions of Good Men in the Goſpel, to the Effects which our Reaſon teaches us, muſt be Natural and Inſeparable from a true Faith and Divine Aſſiſtance? But I will chooſe to make uſe of one Argument which St. *Paul* furniſhes us with, *Heb.* 11. there the Apoſtle proves the poſſibility of pleaſing God by Faith from undeniable Inſtances of Matter of Fact, inferring from what Men have actually done, what 'tis ſtill poſſible for 'em to do. Omitting the miraculous and extraordinary Effects of Faith, I will reduce the Inſtances of this Chapter to three Heads.

Heb. 11.

I. *Firſt*, Such wherein Faith appears victorious over the Temptations which ariſe from the vicious Cuſtoms of the Place

Place Men live in, from the prevalency & faſhionableneſs of Sin amongſt thoſe they Converſe with. *Secondly*, Such wherein Faith triumphs over Temptations ariſing from ſenſual Pleaſures. *Thirdly*, Such wherein it overcomes the ſenſe of Pain, and fear of approaching Evil. 2. 3.

I will begin with the firſt ſort of Inſtances. It muſt be confeſſed that conſidering the Propenſions of our Body and the Vanity and Senſuality which the Mind naturally derives from it, and from its Commerce with the World, that 'tis a difficult thing to encounter Temptations naked and alone; how much more Difficult when back't and aſſiſted by Cuſtom and Faſhion, when univerſal Practice gives Authority and Reputation to Sin and Folly; and the poor Man is left deſtitute of the Aſſiſtance of Good Counſel and the Encouragement of good Examples to encounter not only the Difficulty with which the Reluctancies of our Nature, but alſo the Reproach with which the popularity and prevalency of Sin cloggs and imbitters Vertue: And yet behold *Enoch* in a World (it ſeems) given up

to Sin, did not only keep up in private to the Practice of deſpis'd forſaken Vertue; but was openly and in an extraordinary manner Eminent and Exemplary in it; and therefore was his End as extraordinary as his Life: for *having obtain'd this Teſtimony that he pleas'd God he was tranſlated.* This was owing to his Faith, he was content to endure the Reproach of the World, that he might obtain the Approbation of God; and deſpiſe the Honour and Applauſe of popular Vice, and faſhionable Compliances that he might gain the Kingdom wherein dwells Righteouſneſs. Such an other Example was *Noah*, his Righteouſneſs, was like his Ark afterwards, rais'd above a Deluge not of Waters but Impiety; he liv'd in a World ſo wicked, that it grieved God at his heart that he had made it; in this World he was a Preacher and Example of Righteouſneſs, and his Zeal by an *Antiperiſtaſis*, was not quench't but enkindled by the wickedneſs of the World he lived in: This too was owing to his Faith, he fear'd thoſe threats which that Impious World ſcoffed at, and ſo

*prepar'd*

*prepar'd an Ark to the ſaving of his Houſe, by which he Condemn'd the World, and became Heir of the Righteouſneſs which is by Faith.* No doubt when this ſtrange Building was preparing, *Noah* was aſſaulted by all the Raillery and Contempt by all the ſhews of Wit and Reaſon, Luſt and Prophaneneſs could furniſh an impious Age with: This Man (ſay they) has ever been Singular and Phantaſtick in the whole Method of his Converſation; there wanted but ſuch a prank as this to compleat Fancy into Madneſs: He ever dream't of Judgments, and yet we (he threatned) continued our Mirth and Pleaſure, he alone in Fears and Anxieties has ſuffer'd the Evils which his Melancholy Fancy created, and which are all that we ſhall ever ſee: for how long has he been Preaching dreadful things, and yet ſtill the Sun ſhines, the Heavens are fair and clear, our Feaſts and Luſts have the ſame reliſh ſtill: nor do's our Experience only convince us of the Falſhood, but our Reaſon of the Impoſſibility of this Man's Dreams; for which way ſhall the fixt C. 7.

ſtate of Nature be turn'd upſide down? Whence will this univerſal Deluge come? will his God break up the Fountains of the Deep? or will he open the Cataracts of Heaven? but while they thus prophanely ſcoff'd and meaſur'd the Divine Power by their deprav'd Fancies, *Noah* religiouſly fear'd who had a different ſenſe of the Majeſty of God and Provocation of Sin: he knew that as Mercy, ſo Wrath is with God:
Eccleſ. 16. That as he is *mighty to forgive, ſo is he too to pour out Diſpleaſure.* And by this Faith he preſerv'd himſelf as from the Impiety ſo from the Puniſhment of the Old World: for thô he was not like *Enoch* tranſlated, yet being preſerv'd out of a general Ruine, he liv'd to ſee an End of the Old World, and give beginning to the New.——To theſe I might add *Lot*, whoſe righteous Soul was not infected, but provok'd and griev'd by the Impieties of *Sodom*. *Joſhuah*, as Eminent for his Faith, as Victories, who reſolv'd whatever Courſe the *Iſraelites* wou'd take (who to the laſt ſtood in need of as great Prodigies to reſcue 'em from Idolatry, as once from *Egypt*)

*Egypt*) *He and his Houſe would ſerve the Lord.* Theſe Inſtances are ſufficient to ſhew the Power of Faith in its Victory over popular Errors and faſhionable Sins, and by Conſequence, over many Inclinations at once; for the popularity and prevalency of any Sin is a bait appropriated to our Pride and Vanity, which makes Men affect Precedence and Superiority in all things which the World admires and applauds; nor is this all, it awakens our Natural Inclinations, and Invites us to gratifie 'em, nay, it enrages Natural Appetite by giving it Security and Confidence, and by working upon the Fancy and Imagination: for the Sin is always wonderfully ſet off, that is prevailing and faſhionable. I will now paſs on to the Joſh. 24.

*Second* ſort of Inſtances, wherein we may behold the Strength and Power of Faith in its Victory over all Temptations which ſenſual Pleaſure can preſent us. Numerous are the Inſtances of this kind which I might produce among the Heathens, where we may find a ſenſe of the Dignity of Humane

Nature, of the Decency and Honour of Vertue, and a perſwaſion of the Neceſſity of Purity in order to a future ſtate, atchieving moſt manifeſt Victories over all Carnal and Senſual Luſts; but I will confine my ſelf to two in this Chapter: The firſt is that of *Moſes*, and this is a very full and Comprehenſive one. His Station being ſo near the Crown of *Egypt* preſented him at once with all that the World can entertain ſenſual Man with: There was Pleaſure the Snare of the Soft: There was Power and Wealth the Temptations of the Ambitious Mind; (falſly call'd great) and there was Honour the airy Bait of vain unballaſted Minds. Theſe each of 'em ſingle and alone have like *Saul* and *David* ſlain their Thouſands and ten Thouſands; and yet that it may appear that their overthrow is to be imputed to their own Negligence and Folly, behold here *Moſes* triumphing by Faith over all theſe, *i. e.* over all the ſtrengths and forces of ſenſual Pleaſures joyn'd and united together: when he was come to years, he refus'd to be called the Son of *Pharaoh*'s Daughter, and

and ſo deſerted a Station wherein nothing was bigger than his preſent Enjoyments if he had pleas'd, unleſs his future Hopes, which is the utmoſt Felicity of a ſtate of ſenſuality. And what is more yet, what was it he did quit all this for? what was it that he did chooſe in Exchange? was his Soul too little to fill the great place he left? No, *Moſes* his Courage was great as any thing, but his Meekneſs and Humility; was that height too open and too buſie for ſenſual Enjoyments, and ſo he retir'd like *Tiberius* to *Capria*, that he might indulge himſelf with more ſecurity and freedom, and fewer Interruptions? No, he chang'd Pleaſure for Affliction, Treaſure for Reproach, the Court of *Egypt* for the Deſart of *Midian*, *he choſe rather to ſuffer Affliction with the People of God, than to enjoy the Pleaſures of Sin for a ſeaſon: Eſteeming the Reproach of Chriſt greater Riches than the Treaſures of* Egypt. This was all the great work of Faith: his Mind was betimes poſſeſſed with a juſt Notion of, and awful Reverence for the God of his Fathers, the God of

Heaven and Earth; and therefore beyond the Wants and Dangers of the *Deſart*, he diſcover'd the Peace and Plenty of a *Canaan*, and beyond both the Glories of Eternity; and therefore reaſonably concluded that it was more eligible to be the Son of God than of *Pharaoh*'s Daughter, to be the Heir of Heaven than of the Crown of *Egypt*; all this is intimated Verſe 26. *for he had reſpect to the Recompence of the Reward.*

I will add but one Inſtance more to that of *Moſes*, and indeed there can be but one Inſtance added that is greater, which is that of *Abraham* offering up *Iſaac*. In the former we have ſeen Faith triumphing over ſuperfluous and unneceſſary Pleaſures; in this we ſhall ſee it triumphing over the Natural and inſeparable Appetites of Man. What might not *Abraham*, if he had been under the Power of any Principle but that of Faith, have objected againſt this Command of God? what, ſhall I ſacrifice my Son, my only Son? This is a Sacrifice might become *Baal* or *Moloch*, but how unſuitable to the Nature of that God I worſhip? Nor is this

this leſs repugnant to his Veracity than his Goodneſs; Shall I ſacrifice the Son of the Promiſe? is it for this I have forſook my Home, my Countrey, my Birthright, and follow'd God through Inhoſpitable Deſarts and more Inhoſpitable Nations? are all my Expectations of a numerous and glorious Poſterity come to this at laſt? Thus might *Abraham* have argued, but having a firm belief of the Power, Goodneſs, and Faithfulneſs of God, he wou'd not go about to preſcribe his Wiſdom Methods, or to limit his Omnipotence by unbelieving Fancies, or derogatory Conceptions concerning it, but firmly believing that he could do whatever he pleaſed, that he wou'd do whatever he promis'd; *he that had received the promiſes offer'd up his only begotten Son, of whom it was ſaid, That in* Iſaac *thy ſeed ſhall be called, accounting that God was able to raiſe him up even from the Dead; from whence alſo he received him in a Figure.* We have ſeen Men purſuiſhing all the Pleaſures that the World can preſent us with, and conſequently all thoſe Inclinations and Appetites

tites by which we are carried towards 'em. Faith in these Men encountred and defeated whatever strength and force can be suppos'd either in Fancy or Imagination or in sensual Appetite, or in Natural Affection. The Conclusion deducible from hence is, That there is no desire of worldly Pleasure in Man so vehement, but that it may be conquer'd; and consequently that we cannot be necessarily betray'd into Sin by any inbred Inclination of this kind: there is but one Natural Principle more, from whence we can imagine any Necessity of sinning to arise, which is an Aversion to all Pain or Trouble: there are therefore Temptations suited to this Principle in us, such as deter us from our Duty, either by the sense of present, or the fear of impending Evil: And it is thought to be the highest and difficultest trial of Vertue to surmount these Temptations, *i. e.* to be vertuous when Virtue is immediately attended or visibly threatned with great Evils. And yet behold,

Thirdly, In this Chapter numerous Instances of as great Constancy in suffering

fering Pain, as we have ſeen before of Continence in Rejecting Pleaſure, Verſ. 35, 36, 37. *Others were tortur'd not accepting Deliverance, that they might obtain a better Reſurrection. And others had trial of Cruel Mockings and Scourgings, yea moreover of Bonds and Impriſonment, they were ſton'd, they were ſawn aſunder, were tempted, were ſlain with the Sword; they wandred about in Sheep-skins and Goat-skins being deſtitute, afflicted, tormented.* See here Faith triumphing over all thoſe things that are the Dread and Terrour of Humane Nature, Reproach, Impriſonment, Baniſhment, Death, Death in all its moſt affrightful Shapes, Death in all its variety of Torments, nay, many Deaths in the lingring Torments they were frequently put to; how ſtrong, how firm is this frail weak Nature when ſupported by a Divine Faith! All theſe expected a Happy Reſurrection, they ſaw beyond theſe Midnight-Clouds the Dawnings of Eternity, and unſpeakable Comforts ready to ſwallow up and extinguiſh the memory of their Sufferings; and in this Confi-

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dence they out-brav'd all ſorts of Evils. Nor is it to be wondred at, if Faith which overcomes the ſenſe of preſent Evils ſhou'd diſperſe the fears of future ones: Hence it was that the Parents of *Moſes* deſpis'd the Menaces of *Pharaoh*, a Prince Arbitrary in his Power, Cruel in his Temper, reſolv'd and bloody in the Execution of Miſchief.—Hence it was that *Moſes* in the ſame manner deſpis'd the Wrath of this King, and well knowing that no place would be able to protect him from his Power and Cruelty but the Deſart, he forſook *Egypt*, and fled thither; where he could not but foreſee he was to encounter inſuperable Difficulties; but he endur'd, *as ſeeing him who is inviſible*, and knew that the God of Heaven was every where preſent, & that in deſpight of every thing under his Protection he ſhou'd be both Safe and Happy.

Now ſince there is no Evil the World can threaten us with equal to that of Torments and Death, it were vain and ſuperfluous after we have ſeen theſe Conquer'd, to fancy other Evils of a much ſlighter Nature unconquerable; it

it were abſurd to think that that Man could be frightned from his Duty by popular Reproach, or the Diſpleaſure of great Men, or the Diminution of his Eſtate, who cannot by Death it ſelf? 'twere abſurd to Fancy that he who deſpiſes Impriſonments, Stripes, Hunger, Nakedneſs, Torment in Obedience to his Duty and reſpect to its Reward, ſhou'd be diſcouraged by any little Auſterities or Hardſhips which Vertue may ſometimes exact from him.

Tell me now then, you who complain of the Corruption and Impotence of Man, you who magnifie the Force and Power of Temptation, and from both infer the Impoſſibility of being vertuous and conſequently of being happy, what have you to anſwer to theſe things, theſe Matters of Unqueſtionable Fact? you ſee Reſolution and Faith in theſe Examples rais'd to that height and ſtrength, which no Worldly or Carnal Temptation can reſiſt; tell me then why ſhou'd the Faith of a *Jew* not do that of a Chriſtian? were their Promiſes more Glorious and therefore more

more Efficacious than ours? Look how far ſhort Time is of Eternity, Corruption of Incorruption, ſo far was their *Canaan* of our Heaven: But ſuppoſe they had (as theſe ſure had) a Proſpect of the ſame Heaven, had they a clearer ſight of it; or more convincing Evidence of the certainty of it than we have? Alas their *Shechina*, *Bath-col*, the Thunders and Lightnings of Mount *Sinai*, their Pillar of Cloud and Fire were not half ſo clear aſſurances of God amongſt 'em, as that Glory which ſhun in the face of Jeſus Chriſt, that Power Communicated from above to his Apoſtles, the Reſurrection of *Jeſus* from the Dead, and his Aſcenſion into Heaven, were a manifeſt Teſtimony of God, aſſerting and bearing witneſs to the truth of our Religion, and particularly of that Fundamental Article in it, the Reſurrection of the Body, and Everlaſting life. What then, are our Temptations greater than theirs? the Confidence of the moſt ſenſual Sinner dares not arrive at this Plea: Let the Voluptuary, the Ambitious confront his Temptations with the Enjoyments or

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he Hopes of *Moſes*: Let the moſt fflicted, miſerable Man ballance his Temptations with *Abraham*'s Sacrifice f his Son; or with the Sufferings of hoſe Righteous Men mention'd in the tter part of this Chapter, and he uſt confeſs, that his Temptations are s much weaker than their's, as is his aith. What then can be ſaid? nohing, unleſs plainly this, that our aſe is not the ſame with their's either n Reſpect of our Inclinations or our ſſiſtances: if this were ſo, then how ould theſe Men ſtand as a Cloud of Vitneſſes againſt us in the laſt Day? hich St. *Paul* intimates in the begining of the following Chapter: how atural wou'd it be for us, to wipe off ny Accuſation or Reproach which eir Vertue could faſten upon us by is eaſie anſwer? 'Tis true we were il'd and o'rethrown by thoſe Temptions which theſe Men conquer'd, nd well might this happen, for neither ad they our Infirmities, nor we their race; their Nature was not ſo depraed as our's, nor our Grace ſo ſufficient their's. Were this ſo, the Sinner might

might be more infortunate, but not more Criminal than the Saint; the different Event of things at the laſt Day were to be imputed to the different Diſpenſation not different uſe of Grace, *i. e.* to the partiality of God, not the negligence or wilfulneſs of Man, than which nothing can be more impiouſly or abſurdly affirm'd.

And now, let not hereafter a fancied Impoſſibility of Vertue diſcourage the Weak, nor a pretended one excuſe the wilful; nothing is more Evident than that there is no Inclination in Man that is Incorrigible, nor any temptation Incident to our State which is Inſuperable: Let any Man that pretends the contrary, conſider what Reaſon has done in ſome, what Cuſtom, what Faith in others; Let him himſelf try, what Reaſon, what Diſcipline, what Faith, (from all which I never ſeparate Divine Aſſiſtance) can do in him, and I am Confident, he will not then ſtand in need of any further anſwer to his Objection; his own ſucceſs as well as that of others, will be a ſufficient proof of its weakneſs: Thus I think I have

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in general given a ſatisfactory anſwer to as many at leaſt as plead Natural Incapacity againſt the Poſſibility of being Happy: however that no Diſcouragement, no ſcruple may remain, I will give a particular and clear thô brief anſwer to each part of this Objection. There are three things ſuppos'd by it to render Man naturally incapable of Vertue and Happineſs. *Firſt*, Violent and invincible Inclinations to Vice: againſt this, as the moſt conſiderable part of the Objection, the whole bent and force of the precedent Diſcourſe was levell'd, and therefore this needs no farther anſwer, only here it will be worth our remarking, That thoſe differences that are in the Natures and Tempers of Men are not Eſſential, but Accidental, and conſequently they may make the way to Happineſs more difficult to ſome than others, but impoſſible to none. The ſtrongeſt Inclination to Vertue (I ſpeak of that which is the reſult of Natural Temper) ſeems to me but a weaker Inclination to Vice, every Man has naturally a propenſion to Pleaſure, and conſequently the

ſenſitive Part of us to ſenſitive Pleaſure; how much finer mould our our firſt Parents were made of than we are, I know not; but this I find, the Deſire of Pleaſure was Natural to 'em even in Innocence; This was that which the Beauty of the Apple did eaſily enflame, and that was ſuch a Degree, that I am not able to diſcern by the Text, to which I ſhou'd rather impute their Sin and their loſs of Paradiſe, to the Deſire of Knowledge, or the Deſire of Pleaſure: This tendency of the Senſitive Part is Natural to all, but in ſome 'tis more, in ſome leſs violent; unleſs we may ſay upon one ground, 'tis equal in all, for the difference of Temper diſcovers it ſelf rather in the different kinds of Pleaſure we purſue, than in the different degrees of our Inclination to it; we are all equally allur'd and drawn, yet not by the ſame but ſeveral Objects, ſo that if Luſt prevail in one, Ambition as much prevails in another, and Covetouſneſs in a third, and in others Intemperance or Sloth: So that the difficulty of Vertue ſeems much the ſame to all the

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Sons of *Adam*, the ſtrength of Temptation conſiſting eſpecially in our weakneſs; not in the Excellency of the Object we are taken with, but in our Inclination to it: hence is it as Difficult for one Man to overcome his Covetouſneſs, as to another to o'recome his Luſt; and reſtleſs toilſom Ambition is as luſcious and taking with ſome tempers as lazy and delicious Luxury with others: if this were well-weighed, it would make us more mild and gentle in our Cenſure of others, and not ſo ſoft and eaſie in excuſing our ſelves. 'Tis further worth our obſerving here, that every Man's Vertue derives ſome tincture from his Conſtitution and Temper, ſo that generally ſpeaking, 'tis not difficult to gueſs a Man's Natural Conſtitution by the Complexion of his Religion; however Vertue ceaſes not to be Vertue; nor will that ſlight Allay of the natural Conſtitution extinguiſh its Vigour and Merit, thô it behooves every Man to keep a ſtrict and jealous guard upon his Inclinations, for Nature ſoon revives even after it has been ſome time Buried, and to la-

bour moſt after that Perfection which does moſt contradict and oppoſe the particular Vice of his Conſtitution; for it will be otherwiſe morally impoſſible to gain a Conqueſt over it, and as impoſſible to gain a Rational Peace and Security without this Conqueſt.

A *Second* thing which is ſuppoſed in the Objection to incapacitate Man for Happineſs is an unteachable ſtupidity, conſiſting in a ſlow Conception and treacherous Memory: 'Tis true indeed, the Heathen Philoſophers did require in their Scholars the Knowledg of many abſtruſe and difficult Matters, as antecedently neceſſary to Vertue and Happineſs, Skill in Mathematicks fitted a Man for the *Platonic* Philoſophy, and the Knowledge of Natural things was the Foundation on which the *Epicuræan* pretended his Divine Happineſs and Vertue was to be built; and *Seneca* reckons the unthinking Croud amongſt the Beaſts that Periſh: all of 'em did with one conſent require three things to Compleat a Vertuous and Happy Man; Nature, Education or Inſtruction, and Cuſtom. To the *Firſt*,

*Firſt*, they attributed the Diſpoſition to Vertue; To the *Second* the Beginning; To the *Third*, the Eaſineſs and Conſtancy; and to all three together the Perfection of it. And hence it is that they did diſtinguiſh between Perfect and Imperfect, between Political or Social and Philoſophical Vertue, and did not deem every Nature Capable of that Vertue which was Perfect and Philoſophical. But our bleſſed Lord and Maſter the Author of the Chriſtian Philoſophy requires no ſuch qualifications in thoſe who will be his Diſciples; All that he requires, is, an humble and an honeſt Mind, freed from proud Prejudices, poſſeſs'd with a ſincere Love of the Truth, and a ſincere Reſolution of obeying it: accordingly St. *Paul* obſerves that ſuch were moſt wrought upon by the Preaching of the Goſpel: *Ye ſee your Calling Brethren, how that not many wiſe men after the fleſh, not many mighty, not many noble are called; But God has choſen the fooliſh things of the world to confound the wiſe: and God has choſen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty:* 1 Cor. 1.

*And baſe things of the world, and things that are deſpis'd has God choſen.* Nor will any one imagine that Acute and Eminent parts are Neceſſary to render a Man capable of Being a Chriſtian, who ſhall conſider the Brevity and Plainneſs of the Chriſtian Faith and Law: doth it require a deep and penetrating Judgment, or a firm and tenacious Memory, to enable us to underſtand or remember that plain and ſhort Summary of Chriſtian Practice? The Titus 2. Grace of God *teacheth us to deny all ungodlineſs and wordly Luſts, and live Righteouſly, Soberly and Godlily in this preſent world:* or that as brief and perſpicuous Abridgment of the Chriſtian * John 17. Faith? * *This is life Eternal, to know thee the only true God and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent:* or that excellent * Acts 20. Abridgment of both by St. *Paul*? * *Repentance towards God and Faith in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* 'Tis true all things are now ravell'd and entangled, and the Faith and Vertue of Chriſtianity is not half ſo conſpicuous amongſt Chriſtians as their Theological Wars, Tumults and Factions; But this is owing to

to Man, not to the Goſpel, to the Pride and Superſtition of the one, not to the Obſcurity of the other: Nor may any one here with any ſhew of Reaſon object, That thô the ſubſtance of the Chriſtian Faith and Practice is clear, yet the Reaſons of both are not ſo; for who can ever imagine ſuch a Stupidity of Nature as can diſable any one to underſtand the Proofs by which the Scripture eſtabliſhes the great Fundamental Article of our Faith, That *Jeſus* is the *Chriſt*, the *Meſſias* or *Mediator* between God and Man? or what Stupidity of Nature can render it an impoſſible Task to us to comprehend the two Fundamental Reaſons of Evangelical Righteouſneſs, namely, the Subſerviency of it to the Happineſs of this, and of another Life, and the Holineſs of the God we Worſhip? I do not write this as if I mean't hereby to repreſent Induſtry in ſearch of Divine Truths, as Superfluous and un-neceſſary; but to aſſure all of how mean Capacities ſoever, of the ſucceſs of it. I am not Ignorant how much ſome applaud themſelves on the account of acquir'd

Knowledge of doubtful or abſtruſe things; how much others value themſelves on a peculiar ſort of Politicks remote enough indeed from Vertue; and others on Accompliſhments as remote from Reaſon, as the others Politicks from Vertue; and how much all of 'em do deſpiſe the dulneſs of thoſe who cannot, and the ſimplicity of thoſe who ſtrive not to equal 'em in theſe Attainments: But all this doth not beget in me the leaſt Scruple or Suſpition of the Truth I have before aſſerted; I know that our Duty is plain, and that the Path of Duty is the moſt direct and Compendious one to the Happineſs of this life and of another: for I know that nothing is ſo taking with God as an humble Faith, Devout, Pure, Peaceable and Charitable Religion. As to worldly Happineſs I know that a Man's own Vertue ſupported by God's Spirit, and guided by his Truth is the ſafeſt and the plaineſt Guide he can follow in Dark and Tempeſtuous times; true Policy conſiſts not in that Addreſs or ſubtilty of Spirit, which furniſhes a Man at all times with plauſible Shifts,

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but in that Integrity and Vertue that needs none: and the Beauty and Life of Converſation conſiſts not in Artificial Faces, Phantaſtick Dreſſes, Mechanick Motions, Shrugs and Cringes, much leſs in Mechanick (for ſo I may call ſet forms of Chat) but in an humble, diligent and faithful diſcharge of the Duties we owe to all thoſe ſeveral Relations we ſtand in, and the obſervance of thoſe Laws of Converſation which true Philoſophy preſcribes; This is that which will make us acceptable to all, and dear to the Wiſe and Good; Slights, and Tricks, and Arts may divert and entertain, but Vertues do charm and captivate, thoſe may open us the way to mens Houſes and their Tables, but theſe to their Boſoms to their Hearts. The ſum of all is, Great Endowments of Nature ſeem to be Neceſſary for the Attainment of Unneceſſary Accompliſhments, common Endowments are ſufficient to make us capable of Vertue and Happineſs. This *Marcus Antoninus* had well obſerv'd, and has as well expreſſed in ſeveral places, more fully, *Lib.* 5. *Sect.* 3.

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Marc. Ant. lib. 7. §. 41. more briefly elſewhere thus, ὅτι ἐν ὀλιγίστοις κεῖται τὸ εὐδαιμόνως βιῶσαι, καὶ μὴ ὅτι ἀπήλπισας διαλεκτικὸς καὶ φυσικὸς ἔσεσθαι, διὰ τοῦτο ἀπογνῶς καὶ ἐλεύθερος καὶ αἰδήμων, καὶ κοινωνικὸς καὶ εὐπειθὴς Θεῷ. *Though thou deſpair'ſt of being a Logician, a Naturaliſt, a Mathematician, a Courtier, a State-Empiric, a Talkative Bigot, or a Mimical Fop,* (for theſe too paſs for Accompliſhments with ſome) *yet deſpair not of becoming a Wiſe Man and a Philoſopher; though thou haſt not Abilities big enough to make thy Confidence paſs for Wit and Demonſtration, though thou haſt not the Art of Wheedling, nor the Talent of ſhifting and deluding, though thou haſt no faculty for deep Diſſimulation nor ſlight Inſinuation, though thy parts lye below all theſe and a great many other Perfections, yet for all this deſpair not, thou haſt Parts ſufficient to make thee Happy, thou may'ſt be free* (Redeemed from the Servitude of Vice) *Modeſt, Humble, Charitable, and Obſequious to God, And in theſe very few things conſiſts* τὸ εὐδαιμόνως βιῶσαι, *The Bleſſedneſs of Life.*

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A Third thing wherein the Objection ſuppoſes Natural Incapacity to conſiſt, is ſuch a ſlightneſs, levity, and inconſtancy of Temper as ſeems to render Men neither fit for any cloſe Application, nor ſuſceptible of any deep and laſting Impreſſion; it cannot be denied but that ſome are of ſuch an airy, volatile, and various Temper, that they ſeem to be deſign'd for nothing ſerious, nothing great, as if like Flowers, they were the Sport not Work of Nature, made not for Uſe but Ornament: But I have always obſerved, that Nature makes up defects of one kind by Advantages of another; Thus it happens here, thoſe Conſtitutions which do moſt want ſolidity and ſtrength do moſt partake of Softneſs and Tenderneſs; ſo that they are as much more apt to receive Impreſſions, as they are more unapt to retain 'em than others, like yielding air which the gentleſt ſtroak doth as eaſily divide and part, as it doth eaſily return and unite it ſelf again. Hence 'tis generally obſerv'd, that that Age and that Sex which are ſuppoſed to have leaſt of fixtneſs

neſs and Conſtancy, have moſt of Heat and Paſſion in Religion, and thoſe Minds which are worſt furniſh't with Courage and Experience, with Judgment and Reſolution are moſt apt and eaſie to be mov'd and wrought upon by Religious, or deluded by Superſtitious Fears; and as apt to be tenderly affected by the Repreſentations of Divine Goodneſs and Compaſſion; ſo that like Bodies which have leſs bulk, but more agility, their Motion's nimbler, thô their force and ſtrength be leſs. Now if this be ſo, then the Diſadvantage of this Temper is not ſo great as it is fancied, for though their Paſſions laſt not long, they are eaſily rais'd; and conſequently, if our Addreſſes to ſuch a Temper be but a little more frequently repeated, they cannot but prove ſucceſsful, and ſuch Perſons by the frequent Returns of Holy Paſſions will grow habitually devout, and their Devotion will be as ſteady and more elevated than that of a ſlower and firmer Conſtitution: But after all wherever there appears an Exuberancy of this Humour, this is to be imputed rather

rather to their Fortune than their Nature; a wanton Fortune and too indulgent an Education is generally attended with a gay, wanton and unfix't Mind. And 'tis true that it is a difficult Matter for ſuch Minds as theſe to attain to Wiſdom and Vertue, but 'tis not becauſe they cannot conſider, but becauſe they will not; let but ſuch exchange their haunts of Pleaſure for the Houſe of Mourning; let 'em but now and then intermix the Converſation of the wiſe and ſerious with that of the giddy, fanciful, and frolickſom; and they will ſoon find their Humour much corrected, and their Minds better fix'd; to all this, if they could be perſwaded to add the Contemplation of a ſuffering Saviour, of a Holy God and of a Judgment to come; and to this the Devotion of the Cloſet made up of ſerious Reflexion on theſe Subjects and their own Eternity, this wou'd ſoon reduce their looſe and ſcatter'd Deſires, it wou'd ſoon recall the roving, wandring Mind, and make it delight to dwell at home in the Company of Wiſe, Devout and Important Thoughts. And

And now I think, I have left no part of this Objection founded upon Natural Incapacity unconsider'd. Do Men complain of their heavineſs and ſtupidity? acute Parts and a tenacious Memory are not neceſſary to make us Vertuous or Happy; do they complain of their violent Inclinations to Sin? I have ſhew'd 'em Reaſon, Cuſtom, Faith, curbing and ſubduing the moſt Natural or the moſt outragious and ungovernable Appetites of Man: do they Complain of the Levity and Inconſtancy of their Temper? let 'em retire from the Flatteries and Careſſes of a wanton Fortune, and a wanton Converſation; let 'em acquaint themſelves with the Wiſe or the Afflicted, with Divine Truths and their Cloſets, and this will ſoon work a Happy change upon 'em, if they are too ſoft and delicate for the bitterneſs and ſeverity of theſe Preſcriptions, nothing but the much ſeverer Diſcipline of Afflictions and Judgments can effect their Cure. Under this Head of Natural Incapacity that other Objection from Moral Incapacity has been ſufficiently anſwer'd, for Cuſtom

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is at moſt but a ſecond Nature; and I have at large diſcours'd of the Power of Reaſon and Faith over Nature; I have produc't many and unqueſtionable Inſtances, wherein we have ſeen 'em overcome our moſt natural and moſt neceſſary Appetites, ſuch as are, our Averſion to pain, our love of Life, and ſuch like. Nor is it poſſible that any vitious Cuſtom ſhou'd have taken deeper Root in us, or united themſelves more cloſely with our very Beings than theſe, and therefore it were abſurd to fancy 'em more violent, ſtubborn, or inſuperable; That Expreſſion of the Prophet, *Can the Ethiopian change his skin? or the Leopard his ſpots? Then may ye alſo learn to do Good, who are accuſtomed to do Evil*; is but a Pathetic Exaggeration (which is uſual in a Prophetic ſtile) of the Difficulty, not an Aſſertion of the Impoſſibility of an habitual Sinner's Change; what has been done, and daily is done can be done, and 'tis in vain to prove what no Man can deny; St. *Paul* when he had recited a Catalogue of ſuch Sinners as ſhou'd not enter Jer. 13.

ter into the Kingdom of God, doth
1 Cor. 6. afterwards add, and *ſuch were ſome of you; but ye are waſh't, but ye are ſanctified, but ye are juſtified in the Name of the Lord Jeſus, and by the Spirit of our God.* And *Tertullian* does appeal to the Power and Efficacy of the Chriſtian Religion viſible in the Extirpation of vicious Habits wrought by it, as a proof of its Divine Original; nor are ſuch Inſtances as theſe wanting this Day, Theſe, as they do now refute all the Idle Excuſes of Sinners, ſo will they one Day be urg'd in Judgment againſt 'em to convince 'em that they owe their Ruine to their ſloth and obſtinacy, not their Impotence; thô theſe Men ought to remember too, that Moral Impotence is ever deriv'd from a voluntary Neglect or Contempt of all the means of Happineſs and Vertue: I think I might now diſmiſs this Objection, having given full ſatisfaction to all ſcruples that might diſturb or diſcourage any well-meaning and honeſt Mind: and evidently defeated the pretences of ſuch as wou'd fain ſhroud and ſhelter their voluntary Sin & Folly

under

under the feign'd Excuſes of Impotence, Incapacity and inſupportable Infirmity or inſuperable Temptations: for all theſe are mix't and combin'd in every part of the former Objection, and receive one and the ſame Anſwer. But I foreſee, I ſhall be thought in this whole Diſcourſe to have had too little regard to our Original Corruption, and Divine Aſſiſtance; and therefore thô I endeavour'd to guard it in the beginning againſt all ſiniſter Interpretation, I will here add a brief account of both; eſpecially as far as it ſhall appear to me to concern my preſent Enquiry.

*The Corruption of Nature Conſider'd.*

*Firſt*, As to the Natural Corruption of Man, if Corruption may be call'd Natural, on the account of the Tendency of our ſenſitive Inclinations; ſome things are very plain, ſome very obſcure; what is plain is this, what the preſent ſtate of Man is with reſpect to that Righteouſneſs which the Goſpel requires; what is obſcure is this, what the ſtate of *Adam* before the Fall was, without a clear knowledge of which 'tis impoſſible to determine how much

our Nature is now degenerated (as is ſuppoſed) from the Primitive Purity and Excellency of its Creation. *Secondly*, how Guilt and Corruption could be tranſmitted or deriv'd from *Adam* upon his Poſterity; *Thirdly*, What can be ſuppos'd properly ſpeaking to be the Demerit, Offence, or Provocation of Original Corruption; what Puniſhment can be due to it, divided and ſeparated from Voluntary Tranſgreſſions: Theſe and a great many things of the like Nature I purpoſely paſs over, as either of no great Importance in themſelves, or at leaſtwiſe of no great Uſe to my preſent Enquiry, and go on to what is Plain and Neceſſary, and that is, What the preſent ſtate and Condition of Humane Nature is, for nothing can be more Evident than

Gal. 5. *that the Fleſh luſteth againſt the Spirit, and the Spirit againſt the Fleſh*; Theſe two being contrary one to another in their Tendencies and Inclinations, This Conflict or Oppoſition of Spirit and Body diſcovers it ſelf the more, the more pure and perfect the Law is, that we are under; This tendency

dency of the Body is ſo apparent and undeniable, that it was ever acknowledg'd by all Wiſe Heathens. Hence the * *Platonics* frequently impute the Diminution of the Power and Liberty of the Soul of Man to its Conjunction with the Body; and Hence it was that ſome of 'em whom St. *Auſtin* refutes by giving an Account of the Nature of the rais'd Body, rejected the Chriſtian Doctrine of the Reſurrection, judging the reſtitution of the Body, rather a diminution of than acceſſion to the Happineſs of the Mind. The *Pythagoreans* look't upon the Body as the Priſon and the Puniſhment of the Soul, and in ſhort the Philoſophy of the Heathens did conſiſt chiefly in this, the ſubduing the Appetites of the Body to the Reaſon of the Mind: and this appears moſt plainly to be the Drift and Scope of Chriſtian Philoſophy; From whence it follows, that the Diſorder of Humane Nature (call it Original Corruption or what you pleaſe) conſiſts in the φρόνημα σαρκὸς, the Luſt and Concupiſcence of the Fleſh, This is Evident from all the Writings of

* *Plotinus Ennead. 1. lib. 1. c. 9. Enn. 2. lib. 3. c. 15. Enn. 3. lib. 1. c. 8. Aug. de Civ. Dei.*

St. *Paul*, eſpecially *Romans* the 7th, and this is the ſenſe of our Church *Art.* the 9th; Nor indeed are we Capable of Imagining any other Corruption in Man; for if there be a Conflict betwixt Right Reaſon, and Carnal Appetite, if the Tendency of the Body and the Mind be oppoſite and controdictory, 'tis Nonſence to ſuppoſe both Corrupt and Sinful; for then the Contradiction and Conflict wou'd ceaſe: From hence it follows plainly, that we are born with Capacities of and Inclinations to Vertue as well as Vice, thô nothing be more manifeſt than that the Appetite of the Body exerts it ſelf firſt, grows up to Strength and Maturity ſooneſt, and doth more powerfully and forcibly move than the Suggeſtions and Perſwaſions of Reaſon: *Secondly*, It is from hence plain, that a ſtate of Righteouſneſs conſiſts in the prevalency of the Mind over the Body, and a ſtate of Sin in the prevalency of the Body over the Mind. And from hence appears the Neceſſity of *Divine Grace or Aſſiſtance; for ſince the Dominion of Righteouſneſs cannot be Eſtabliſh't, but

* *Divine Aſſiſtance or Grace Conſider'd.*

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in the ſubjection of the Body, and the Body doth in Power ſo much o'rematch the Mind, the Appetites of it being both more forward, more violent, more conſtant, I had almoſt ſaid, more Natural, than the Dictates of Reaſon; and this Power receiving daily increaſe and augmentation by a ſenſual Education, and by a daily and unavoidable Commerce with the World, and thoſe Temptations which awaken, gratifie and enflame the Appetites of the Body, it were morally impoſſible that the Mind ſhou'd maſter and o'recome the Body, if it were not aided by Divine Grace and Aſſiſtance; but then it muſt be remembred, that 'tis repugnant to the very Notion of Aid or Aſſiſtance, that it ſhould make void the Neceſſity of our own Endeavours; as the Light of Revelation doth not extinguiſh that of Reaſon but increaſe it; ſo neither does the ſtrength of God's Grace render our Natural ſtrength uſeleſs, but improve and help it: This added to what I have ſaid before, compriſes all that is neceſſary to be known concerning Grace, and may be reduc'd to theſe three or

four Heads. *First*, That the Grace of God is neceſſary to enable us to live Vertuouſly and Happily; *Secondly*, That Grace does not extinguiſh Nature, or cancel our Obligation to Induſtry or a careful uſe of that Natural Power God has inveſted us with; *Thirdly*, That God is moſt ready and deſirous to further and aſſiſt all Men in their Endeavours after Vertue and Happineſs: *And laſtly*, That the Grace of God is ſufficient for us, or, that we receive by it as great an addition of Strength or Spiritual Aid, as being joyn'd with our ſincere Endeavours, is neceſſary to make us Vertuous and Happy: if we deny the firſt of theſe, we ſubvert the Foundation of Prayer to and dependence upon God, we can give no tolerable account of at leaſt one third part of the Goſpel of Chriſt, and we unavoidably diſcourage Mankind from all hopes of Happineſs; if we deny the ſecond, we deſtroy the very Nature of Man, render all Laws, Exhortations, Admonitions, Rewards and Puniſhments uſeleſs, ſilly and impertinent; and make Divine Grace the very foundation

dation of carnal Security, of deſperate and deſtructive Negligence and Sloth: if we deny the third or fourth, we muſt unavoidably affirm, either that the Happineſs of Man does no way depend upon the Grace of God, or that his Miſery is fatal and unavoidable: All which are Abſurdities groſs and palpable to all Minds which lie not under the thickeſt darkneſs of blind Superſtition and Prejudice. Whoever ſhall now reflect upon all that has been ſaid will eaſily be able to conclude, that we have no Enemy without us, none within us that can neceſſitate and compel us to be miſerable; Miſery may be our Choice or Puniſhment, it can never be our Fate: Our natural Corruption may invite and incline us, but can never force and compel us to be wicked: for there is no Temptation, no Inclination, which God's Grace and our Induſtry are not able to reſiſt and o'recome: So that now there remains at laſt no other Incapacity of Happineſs than what is *Penal*, which is the next thing to be ſpoke to.

*Of Penal Incapacity.* Penal Incapacity consists in God's final and immutable rejection of Man from Grace and Pardon. The matter of this Objection shall be fully handled, *Vol.* 3. where I shall be oblig'd to treat of the Troubles of the Mind, and their Cure; In the mean time, all that is Necessary to be observ'd here is, *First*, That this state of final Rejection from Grace and Pardon is *Penal*, a state to which no thing but Mens voluntary Transgressions can betray 'em, and those too Transgressions of the deepest guilt, and most crying aggravations; for surely nothing less can provoke a God *who delights to exercise loving Kindness and Mercy*, a God of infinite long-Suffering and Patience, to pass a Sentence, an irreversible Sentence of eternal Ruine and Damnation upon any of his Creatures. *Secondly*, That no mistaken Fancies of the Unpardonableness of our state may either tempt us desperately to renounce God, our Saviour, and Vertue; it behoves us to consider what ought to be the proper Influence of this Perswasion that there is such a Penal state on this side the Grave. First,

Firſt, If they who believe ſuch a ſtate will act conſonant to their own Opinion, they muſt not allow themſelves in a courſe of wilful Sin, leſt they be inſenſibly betray'd into that dreadful ſtate.

Secondly, Since Impenitence and Hardneſs of heart is a Neceſſary and inſeparable Conſequence of that dreadful Sentence which excludes Men from Grace and Pardon; therefore no Man can rationally conclude himſelf in this ſtate, till he has made all poſſible attempts to recover himſelf from his Sin, and that without ſucceſs; And becauſe,

Laſtly, No man can conclude his Endeavours unſucceſsful, till Death ſurpriſe him in an Obdurate and Impenitent ſtate; for habitual Sinners have become eminent Saints, and laps't Chriſtians, nay Apoſtates have not only recover'd their former ſtate, but redeem'd their Crimes by more than Ordinary degrees of Repentance, Devotion, and Charity, and by undeniable Conſequence have been reſtor'd to God's Favour; for Grace is in order to Pardon, Sanctification in order to Juſti-

Juſtifieation, Vertue in order to Glory; therefore no Man muſt give over his Attempts of appeaſing God, and ſubduing his Corruptions, while God continues him in the Land of the Living: Theſe Rules if obſerved will, I queſtion not render the Perſwaſion of ſuch a *Penal* ſtate, as the Objection ſuppoſes, very profitable and uſeful to ſome, and not pernicious to the eternal Intereſt of any: For he who by the Dread of ſuch a ſtate, is deterr'd from bold and provoking Sins, and from an habitual Courſe of wilful Impiety, reaps an Unſpeakable Advantage by it; and he who adheres to Religion and Vertue, and continues to his life's End, ſincerely endeavouring to pleaſe God and obtain his Pardon, ſhall never ſuffer any Prejudice in another life by his melancholy and miſtaken Fancies in this. I have now ſpoke to all thoſe Objections which ſeem to oppoſe and aſſault my Poſition of the Poſſibility of Attaining Happineſs with any ſhew of Reaſon. It is now high time I ſhould proceed.

SECT

## SECT. II.

TO anſwer thoſe who againſt this Aſſertion oppoſe not Reaſons and Arguments, but Obſervation and Experience; they do not find that ever any have been Happy, and therefore they conclude that none ever can. The Anſwer to this Objection will be a moſt convincing Argument of the Truth of my Poſition, *That Happineſs is attainable in this Life*; for if I prove this Obſervation falſe, and can produce undeniable Inſtances of Happy Men, the Diſpute falls of it ſelf. But where ſhall I find them? Shall I preſent you with the Envied Happineſs or Glory of Mighty Princes? Alas! the Wiſeſt of the Heathen Gods preferr'd the Happineſs of *Aglaus Sophydius* before that of *Gyges!* And the wiſeſt of Men (in his time at leaſt) preferr'd the Happineſs of *Tellus* before that of *Cræſus!* And this Sentence ſeems not only to deny thoſe particular Princes Happy but alſo to pronounce the very ſtate of Royalty uncapable of Happineſs,

*Inſtances of Happy Men.*

neſs, or at leaſt leſs capable than that of a Plough-man; indeed this ſtate when active and glorious is full of Fears, and Cares, and Hazards; when ſluggiſh and unactive full of ſhame: what can be the Happineſs of a ſtate too big for Friendſhip or for Pleaſure? for love is the Buſineſs and Enjoyment of Equals; Obedience is all Subjects can offer, or indeed Monarchs can receive; All higher and nearer approaches to the Throne are but Intruſions of Ambition and Deſign: Nor can I poſſibly diſcern what Satisfaction the great Mortal can take in any Expreſſions of Duty or Affection, which he can never diſtinguiſh from the fawning and flattery of thoſe who in their hearts deſpiſe and hate him: How ſhall he know that any truly love him, when none dare ſlight him? or how ſhall he diſcern who ſerves him out of Duty, where every Man even obtrudes himſelf upon his Commands out of Intereſt? In a word, the Paſſions of a Prince are ſo much greater than other Men's as is his Mind and Fortune; his Converſation is not with the Minds of Men,

Men, but with Faces, or rather Masks and Diſguiſes. And as to his Pleaſures, his guſt of 'em is very flat, being cloy'd and ſurfeited by his Affluence: And whereas all other Men as the Ambitious, the Vain-glorious, the Covetous, the Lover ſeem to aſcend and riſe above themſelves in the Acquiſition of thoſe Pleaſures they aſpire to; the Monarch debaſes himſelf, deſcends and ſtoops below his Fortune to meet *his*. And yet I am not of *Apollo*'s nor *Solon*'s Mind, I cannot think there is any great Happineſs in the Ignorance and the quietneſs of a labouring Cottager, ſuch as *Tellus* or *Aglaus Sophydius*; I love Security, but not that which Contempt breeds, I would have my Security owing not to the Littleneſs of my Fortune, but the Greatneſs of my Mind: I love a Quiet, but a Philoſophical life, I would have my Tranquillity ſpring not from the Ignorance but Reaſon of my Mind; from the Right Government of my Paſſions, not from the Meanneſs of my Education or Fortune. For the ſame Reaſon I do not call Men happy, whoſe ſlow and eaſie Temper like the waters

waters of the Dead Sea, is not to be mov'd even by Wind and Storm: I do not call Stupidity a Calm, the Soul that is insensible of Trouble, is so of Joy too: whoever is incapable of any deep Impression, is so of any serious Reflexion too, and what is the state of such a Man? I would not have my life pass by like a Dream, whil'st fleeting or imperfect Images of things do scarce awake, and too too slightly affect my drouzy or dazled sense. In a word, the Happiness I seek after is such a one which is owing neither to Natural Constitution, nor to Fortune: for then, it would not be in our Power. The Men then whom I call Happy, are such who are possessed of true and solid Goods, and those such which Fortune cannot give nor take away; such were *Christ* and his *Apostles*, and such are all those at this Day as are transform'd into the Glory and Image of the Divine Nature by the mighty Energy of the Divine Spirit and Divine Truths. Let us consider therefore what the state of *Christ* and his Apostles was in this Life: I will not take notice of those Ecstatic

Pleasures

Pleaſures which they felt when they did thoſe God-like Works which we call Miracles, what Triumph could be equal to theirs who ſaw Diſeaſes, Devils and Death ſubject to their Commands? what joy could be equal to theirs, when they gave Life to the Dead, Sight to the Blind, Strength to the Lame, &c? To what a height was Wonder and Delight rais'd in each of theſe Performances? for nothing could be more wonderful than the Power, or delightful than the Charity conſpicuous in 'em: but this I paſs over, becauſe this Power is not to be attain'd by us: Let us come to that which is, I mean the Vertues of Chriſt and his Apoſtles; *He had not a hole where to lay his Head:* 'tis true, but how truly great was he in himſelf? how much above the mean and unmanly deſires of Ambition, Covetouſneſs, or Luſt? he indulg'd himſelf in no ſenſual Carnal Pleaſures, 'tis true, but how Calm that Soul which no Angry or Envious Paſſion diſturb'd, where nothing but ſacred Love dwelt? the love of God, the love of Man, and the rational and wiſe love of himſelf? how

how Happy that Soul which was illuminated with Divine Knowledge, supported by an unshaken Faith, fill'd with joyful Reflexions and glorious Hopes? that Soul which in the silence of the Night, and the Retirements of the Mount did pour forth it self in Prayers and Hallelujah's, that Soul which full of God and full of Heaven, had no room for uneasie Cares or afflicting Sorrows? 'tis true, our Saviour met Death with pale looks and melancholy pangs of Soul; but 'tis as true, that his Faith surmounted his Fears, his Agony endur'd but for a little while an undisturb'd Peace, and a well-settled serenity of Mind immediately follow'd it, and his trouble and Pain in Death, like the Ecclipse that attended it, did but o'recast and darken the joy, the light within, not extinguish it: who could finish the last Act of Life with more humble Majesty, or with more settled Peace? in the Life and Death of our dear Lord we behold that of his Disciples, for they were all Followers of him, as they desir'd we should be of them: what can be happier than their

state

ſtate here was? their Life was Regular and Philoſophical, their Joy ſteady and Rational, their Love of God vigorous, their Charity to Man fervent and Diffus'd; their Deſires, as to the World, modeſt; their Minds reſolv'd and brave in Afflictions, Chearful and Compos'd in Death it ſelf.

Let it ſtand then as an unſhaken Truth, That Happineſs may be attain'd in this Life; for what the Followers of our Lord and Maſter attain'd to, that may we; their Natural Paſſions and Infirmities were the ſame with our's, our Trials and Temptations are far leſs than theirs; we ſerve the ſame God, we are guided by the ſame Truths, ſupported by the ſame Power, elevated by the ſame Hopes; we have the ſame Peace bequeath'd us, the ſame Spirit, the ſame Heaven promis'd us, and we march under the Conduct of the ſame Captain of our Salvation, who *by his Death has Aboliſh't Death, and brought Life and Immortality to Light.* Nor ought this to ſeem to us an over-daring or preſumptuous Poſition, ſince the Poſſibility of Happineſs is a Notion

Conſonant to the Common ſenſe of all Mankind: for 'tis Happineſs which Laws enacted for the Government of the Multitude, and Philoſophical Rules preſcrib'd for the Government of our Paſſions, do aim at; All Law-givers have ever promis'd the people Wealth, and Peace, and Glory, and Security, as the fruits of their Obedience: and all Philoſophers have ever promis'd Tranquillity of Mind and Rational Pleaſure to their Followers as the Rewards of Conformity to their Precepts: And as it cannot ſurely be deny'd, but that the Kingdom is moſt Happy, which by juſt Laws and a well-temper'd Authority, is freed from thoſe Fears and Diſtractions, from thoſe Miſchiefs and Confuſions to which others are expos'd by Anarchy or Tyranny by the Inſolence of the Multitude, or the Impotence of the Prince; ſo it cannot be deny'd, but that the Man is moſt Happy, whoſe well-ſettled Peace is eſtabliſh't upon ſolid Grounds of true Wiſdom; being neither oppreſs'd by the Tyranny of Superſtition, nor vex't and diſquieted by the Inſolence of unruly

ruly Paſſions, to which the weakneſs of *Reaſon* ſubjects Men. As to Religion, which is a third governing Principle, this only propoſes a more perfect Happineſs, and a more plain and direct way to it, than Nature of it ſelf could: it only relieves and recruits our Natural Power by that of Grace, and encreaſes the Light of Reaſon by a participation of new Rays of Revelation. If then Happineſs be the great End which Law and Philoſophy, Revelation and Reaſon, God and Man, do unanimouſly propoſe to us, how abſurd and palpable a Contradiction were it to all theſe, to deny the Attainment of it poſſible?

*The Concluſion.*

To look back now upon this whole Chapter, and ſum up the ſubſtance and force of it, 'tis this, God who made us, made us on purpoſe to be Happy; for what other deſign could Infinite Love propoſe to it ſelf in our Creation? and propoſing to himſelf this End, he endow'd us with Faculties and Capacities that might fit us for the Contemplation and Enjoyment of himſelf, and of his Works: The World

provided by him for our Entertainment, he filled with all things that could Miniſter either to our Neceſſities or Delights: here God has planted us, not as Inhabitants but Sojourners; for this is but our ſtate of Probation, Angels had their times of Trial, ſo have Men; here he wou'd have us aſpire after, as near as we can, that life Angels lead in Heaven; for we are one Day to be equal to 'em: here he wou'd have us learn and practiſe thoſe Vertues which fit us for the Society & Enjoyment of that Kingdom wherein dwells Righteouſneſs, for that is the bleſſed End and Conſummation of all our Endeavours, Deſires and Hopes; but when we make Heaven the Abode, the Seat of Perfect Happineſs, we do not thereby ſuppoſe that it is baniſh't from the Earth, but rather on the contrary, if that ſtate be the Conſummation of all things, 'tis Neceſſarily to be concluded that every ſtep we advance nearer to it, we mount and aſcend higher, into brighter, calmer and purer Regions: Heaven is like a Glorious Building, whoſe acceſs is full of Delight

light and Beauty; for as that Youth which precedes our Manhood, has its Sweetneſs, its Beauty, its natural Perfection and Pleaſure; ſo has this mortal-ſtate which precedes our Angelical, its proper Degree of Perfection and Bleſſedneſs: and this is no ſmall one neither, for as we are created but a little lower than the Angels in reſpect to the Dignity of our Nature, ſo ſurely our Happineſs begins nearly to approach and reſemble theirs: When our Mind fill'd with Divine Truths, Charity and Hope becomes Free, Generous, Reſolv'd, Conſtant, Chearful, Meek, Gentle, Devout Heavenly: when it has ſo accuſtom'd it ſelf to Vertue, and familiarly acquainted it ſelf with Heaven, that the Sins and Pleaſures of the ſenſual Part of the World look like the Manners and Entertainments, not only of a Foreign, but Barbarous and Impoveriſh't Countrey; and when laſtly by its frequent Retirements from the Body and daily Commerce with Rational and Spiritual Pleaſures, it not only aſſerts its Soveraignty over it, but begins to live ſo independent of it, that

at the laſt when it ſhall in Death mount up upon the Wings of pure Flame to Heaven, it ſhall not ſuffer as if the Body needed to be torn from it, but ſhall let it fall, as *Elijah* did his Mantle. Thoſe Complaints therefore which we make againſt our preſent ſtate, and thoſe Reproaches with which we outrage and vilifie our Nature, are falſe and unjuſt, for we are by God created and deſign'd for Happineſs, and this Happineſs God hath been pleas'd to put in our own power to place within our reach: There is no Fate, but what God has made us our ſelves Arbiters of; we lye under no Neceſſity, no Fatality, but what our own Vices betray us to; Nor do we ſtand in need of the Indulgences of Fortune, the Tranquillity and Pleaſure of a Vertuous Man is an Image of God's own; it ſprings from within, not from without; 'tis true there are Difficulties which obſtruct our Progreſs to Happineſs; but they are ſuch as all Wiſe and Good Men have conquer'd: 'tis true, Nature labours under its Infirmities, that is, ſenſual Propenſions and Inclinations; but

it

it is ſtrengthen'd and ſupported by Reaſon, by Revelation, by Grace: we may fall ('tis true) a Sacrifice to God's Wrath, but it muſt be after we have liv'd long in Contempt of his Mercy, and obſtinate Defyance of his Grace. Methinks theſe Conſiderations ſhould raiſe and exalt the Mind of Man, they ſhould inſpire us with Deſires and Hopes worthy of Rational and Immortal Souls, like the *Iſraelites* when they march't out of *Egypt*, we ſhould dream of nothing but Triumph, Glory, and Happineſs.

## CHAP. III.

### *Of the Causes of Man's Misery.*

*The Deviation of our Lives from Right Reason, the true and Universal Cause of Man's Misery. This Deviation discovers it self, First, In our proposing to our selves some false and irrational End of Life. Secondly, In our Insincerity in pursuing our true and Rational End. The Reasons of both these, are, 1. The Frame, and Contexture of our Nature. 2. Vicious Education. 3. A vicious Conversation and Course of Life; from whence proceed, Inconsideration, Insincerity, False Notions, Ungovernable Passions, Remissness and Inconstancy. A Representation of the whole Matter. From* all *inferr'd, First, What Happiness in general is. Secondly, Two general Rules for the Attaining of it.*

Were

WEre the Happy, like * *Tully's* Wiſe man, a mere Idea, ſomething no where to be found but in the Characters and Deſcriptions which Philoſophers give us of him, this were an unconquerable Diſcouragement; no Briskneſs of Wit, no Charms of Fancy, no force of Eloquence, no height of Spirits or heat of Confidence were ſufficient to remove it, and to engage Men in ſuch a Deſperate and unaccountable Enterprize as this Suppoſition would render the purſuit of Happineſs: for how fond and groundleſs a Preſumption were it to purſue that which all Mankind had ever as Unſucceſsfully as Earneſtly and Indefatigably attempted? I have therefore endeavoured with all my might in the former Chapter to free men's Minds from any Suſpition or Fears of this Kind, anſwering all Objections that might ſeem to repreſent *Miſery fatal*, or *Happineſs unattainable*, and by undeniable proofs Confirming the Oppoſite Truth. But if this be true, that Happineſs is attainable, and if it be as true, as

* *Quem adhuc nos quidem vidimus Neminem, ſed Philoſophorum ſententiis qualis futurus ſit ſi modo aliquando fuerit, exponitur. Tuſc. Queſt. l. 2.*

as certainly 'tis, that there needs no Eloquence to enkindle in any Man the Desires of Happiness, or to incite and spur him on to Endeavour its Attainment, all Mankind being carried on towards it by Natural, and therefore Constant and Passionate Inclinations: will it not be Natural to demand, Whence is it that so few are Happy? Whence is it that Misery and Trouble, Affliction and Sorrow fill almost every place and every Bosome? Not only no Kingdom or City, but no Town, no Village, no Family, I might almost add no one particular Person, being exempt and free; no place or person is priviledg'd against Grief and Trouble, it invades the Tribunal of Judges, the Thrones of Princes, and what is almost as sacred as either, the Retirements and Closets of the Devout and Learned; nay scarcely is the Church and the Altar a secure Sanctuary against it.

This will not be difficult to Comprehend, if we do thorowly weigh and soberly consider the true Causes of Man's Misery; but the particular and distinct

diſtinct Diſcuſſion of each of theſe will fall in, in its proper place in the following Treatiſes, and therefore I ſhall Diſcourſe of 'em here only generally and briefly, as the Nature of an Introduction requires.

*Deviation from Reaſon the general Cauſe of Man's Miſery.*

Many are the particular Cauſes of Humane Miſery, but they may *all* be reduc'd to this Univerſal and Immediate One, Namely, *That we do not live Conformable to our Reaſon.*

——Quid enim Ratione timemus aut Cupimus ——

When do our Affections ſpring from, or when are they govern'd by Reaſon? When are our Deſires or Fears, our Joys or Sorrows Wiſe, and Juſt, and Rational and Holy? how frequently are our Actions nothing elſe but the bruitiſh and blind Sallies of fooliſh Paſſions, and our lives are generally nothing elſe but the Wandrings and Rambles of deluded Imaginations? How commonly do we act what we our ſelves Condemn? and how commonly doth the whole Courſe of our Lives diſpleaſe our ſelves as much as others? and yet we live on in Contradiction to

to our Reaſon, and ſometimes to our Inclinations too: How unlike are we in our Converſation to our ſelves in our Retirement? how unlike are we in the Devotions of our Cloſets to our ſelves in the Employment of our ſeveral Profeſſions? how calm, ſedate, wiſe, holy, and reſolv'd in the one? how anxious and uneaſie, how fooliſh, earthy, and inconſtant in the other? but in nothing does our Deviation from Reaſon more evidently appear than in two things.

*This Deviation diſcovers it ſelf in our falſe Ends and Inſincerity.*

*Firſt*, In our propoſing to our ſelves falſe and Irrational Ends of Life; and *Secondly*, In our Inſincerity in purſuing the true and rational one, *that* is Happineſs. As to the *firſt*, who ſees not how the Life of Man is perverted, the force and tendency of Nature crook't and bow'd to Deſigns utterly unſuitable to the Capacities and Faculties of a Rational Mind, and to the great End of our Creation? who can look into the Life of Man, and not eaſily conclude that his chief Aim is Wealth and Greatneſs, not Happineſs? or which is ſomething ſillyer, that his Deſign is

ſome

ſome unneceſſary Accompliſhment, not Vertue and Goodneſs, or a vain Eſteem and popular Applauſe, not the Peace and Wiſdom of his Mind? who ſees not how greedily Men purſue thoſe ſenſual Satisfactions which naturally tend to enſlave the Soul, and to extinguiſh the rational Pleaſure and Vigour of our Minds? In a word, Wealth, and Honour, and Power, and Pleaſure, are the Idols of Mankind, theſe are the things for which they live, for which they love and value life; theſe are the glorious Poſſeſſions which enflame our Emulations and our Induſtry; theſe are the things which the Unfortunate man Envies, and the Fortunate Honours; theſe are the things which diſtinguiſh and diſcriminate Mankind into their ſeveral Ranks and Degrees, the Contempt or Eſteem of the World, the Reſpects and Affronts, the Love and Hate of Mankind being ever proportion'd to the Degrees of Wealth and Power which they fancy others poſſeſſed of. To theſe noble Ends the ſage and experienc'd Parent trains up his young ones, inſtilling daily

ly into 'em all the ſubtil Maxims of Covetouſneſs and Ambition, and judging of their Proficiency and Hopefulneſs by the Progreſs they make towards theſe Ends, *that is*, the more enſlav'd they are, the more Hopeful, the more promiſing is their Youth; Nor are Men more Zealous in purſuing the falſe, than inſincere in purſuing the true Ends of Life, Vertue and Happineſs. This is too too Evident to any one who ſhall conſider how fond we are of our Diſeaſes and our Errors, how Impatient of that Inſtruction or Reproof which tends to Cure, undeceive and diſabuſe us, how ſluggiſh we are in the ſtudy of Important Truths, how liſtleſs and remiſs in the uſe of thoſe means which conduce to Vertue, to the freeing our Minds, and to the Confirming our Reſolutions: and therefore laſtly how light, wavering and unconſtant we are in the Practice of thoſe things which Right Reaſon convinces us to be our Duty. All this is plain and Evident, we ſee and feel it and bemoan it, but yet we live on in the ſame manner ſtill; whence therefore

fore is this Infatuation of our Underſtanding that enſlaves us to falſe and irrational Ends? whence is that Impotence of Mind? whence is that Inſincerity that deludes our Deſires, and produces nothing but feeble and unſucceſsful Endeavours? neither is this a difficult Matter to diſcover; that we live and act irrationally proceeds evidently from *three* Cauſes. *Firſt*, The Contexture and Frame of our Nature. *Secondly*, A vitious Education. *Thirdly*, Vitious Converſation.

*The Contexture of Nature the firſt Cauſe of an Irrational Life.*

The firſt ſpring or ſource of Irrational Deſires and Actions is the Contrivance and Compoſition of our Nature; our ſenſual and bruitiſh Appetites have their Foundation in our Natural Conſtitution as well as our rational Affections; for we are made up of Body as well as Soul; Hence it is that there is in Man a doubtful fluctuation and indetermination to different Objects, the Reaſon of the Mind, and the Appetite of the Body diſtracting and dividing him by their different Propoſals. The Impreſſions of ſenſe and Repreſentations of Reaſon, ſucceſſively awakening in

in him very different and generally very contrary Desires: Whereas Angels by the Perfection, and Beasts by the Imperfection of their Nature are determin'd and confin'd to their Proper and Necessary Objects; Man is left to a strange uncertainty, undetermin'd by the Reason of the Mind, or the Instinct or Appetite of the Body, mov'd indeed successively by each, perfectly govern'd and over-rul'd by neither. But it were well for Man that the Inclinations of these two different Principles were so justly pois'd, that he were naturally left in a true Liberty and pure Indifference equally able to follow the Dictates of Reason, and the Appetites of Flesh and Blood: But alas! how Impetuous are the Lusts of the Body! how Irresistible are those Passions which the Objects of Sense aided by a Carnal Imagination raise in us! On the other side, how Cold are the Representations of Reason, when we most need its Assistance and Authority! how faint and feeble the Natural Inclination of the Soul to what is truly good and great! how remote and distant the Re-

wards of Vertue, and conſequently how weak and cold their Influence, and how faint and imperfect is the Pleaſure that attends it abſtracted from future Rewards in all other Minds beſides thoſe who are arriv'd in ſome ſort at Perfection! 'tis true, at ſome Seaſons, and upon ſome Occaſions the Remonſtrances of Conſcience are ſo ſharp, its Reproaches ſo bitter, the Diſdain and Confuſion of the Mind ſo unſufferable that they render that which is a Pleaſure to the Senſe, a Torment to the Soul, and its agreeableneſs to our Imagination cannot make amends for its harſhneſs and Contradiction to our Reaſon. But alas! theſe are but ſhort-lived Fits which ſoon paſs over, for Buſineſs diverts, Pleaſure inchants, and Repeated Violence offer'd to our Reaſon ſtupifies and deadens the Natural Conſcience, and what is worſe than all this, a ſilly and vitious Education does generally ſo corrupt our Judgments, and prepoſſeſs us with vain and fooliſh Affections that the Checks of Conſcience are extremely ſeldom and extremely faint,

unleſs the Commiſſion of ſome groſs Sin do awaken it by a deep and Deadly Wound. This is,

*Education a ſecond Cauſe of Man's Miſery.*

2. A ſecond Cauſe of that general Apoſtacy and Defection from Reaſon ſo notorious in the World, *A ſilly and vitious Education.* How well does it fare with Children when they derive only their Original Corruption from their Parents? Ah! how often are their weak Diſpoſitions to Vice nurs'd and cheriſh't by their Parents into an Abſolute, uncontroulable and ſettled Tyranny. Nay, what is worſe yet, how often are the ſeeds of Vertue, thoſe towardly Diſpoſitions which many bring into the World with 'em choak't and ſtifled, not only by the Neglect, not only by the Indulgence, but even by the Example and Authority of Parents?

*Velocius & citius nos*
*Corrumpunt Vitiorum Exempla Domeſtica, magnis*
*Cùm ſubeant animos Autoribus.*

Juven. Sat. 14.

*Ah, with what ſpeed muſt the Infection ſpread,*

When

*When Youth by Parents Crimes are warranted,*
*And Tempted on to Sin!*——

When Corrupt Inclination is ripen'd into a ſecond Nature, when our innate weakneſſes and Follies are confirm'd by thoſe falſe Principles, and that vitious Confidence which we derive from Education, then we are ſent into the World left to our own diſpoſal, abandon'd to our own Government; Poor Creatures! not only expos'd unarm'd, unguarded to Temptations, but like *Sampſon* to the *Philiſtines* tied and bound too: Ah! could we ſo eaſily burſt our Bonds as he did his! but whence ſhou'd we recover our loſt Liberty? Converſation, inſtead of being an Aſſiſtance to us in our Endeavours after Happineſs, doth generally tend to promote our Miſery; Philoſophy is not now the buſineſs of Converſation, nor is Friendſhip any way uſeful or ſerviceable to the great End of Life: the Ligament of Society is Riot and Revelling or ſordid Profit and Intereſt, or peradventure folly, trifling, and impertinence: theſe are the ties and *Converſation a third.*

bonds of our Confederacies; ſo that whatever Authority our Friends and Acquaintance have over us, whatever influence they have upon us, is imploy'd to no other purpoſe but to recommend and endear Vice to us, to render it, if not beautiful and lovely to us, at leaſtwiſe leſs deform'd and ugly than it is: Hence it is that retirement is ſo generally recommended to thoſe who deſign to make any Progreſs in true Wiſdom, and that ſuch as are truly Vertuous do ſo paſſionately Complain of the Diſadvantages they ſuffer by Converſation with the World: for the truth is, Wiſdom and Goodneſs are ſuch unfaſhionable Theams of Diſcourſe, ſuch unuſual, nay, I may add unwelcome Subjects of Entertainment, that the Company deſerves now to be prais'd, which is only barren and unprofitable not hurtful, and wherein we ſuffer no greater loſs than that of our time.

It is now eaſie to imagine what fruit a Corrupt Nature muſt bring forth, when not only left deſtitute of Neceſſary Cultivation, but deprav'd yet more by

by a vitious Education, and vitious Converſation; what can all theſe together bring forth, but a loathſom brood of Diſeaſes and Vices ſuch as theſe, Raſhneſs, Precipitancy, Heedleſneſs, and Unthoughtfulneſs, Falſe Notions, Ungovernableneſs and Impotence of *Will*, Inſincerity, Levity and Inconſtancy, which are the Plagues of Humane Life, and the fatal Obſtacles of our Tranquillity? for either they obſtruct our true Happineſs by preventing our ſearch after it; or delude our ſearch by Corrupting and Perverting our Underſtanding; or elſe they fruſtrate and defeat the Influence of its Diſcovery by Obſtinate Reluctancies in the Body, and an Unhappy Impotence in the Mind: All this is manifeſt upon the moſt tranſient glance we can take, of theſe particulars. To begin with *Want of Conſideration*: This is a Neceſſary Effect of that Corruption and Depravation which I have aſcrib'd to Nature, Education, and Converſation; The Body unaccuſtomed to obey is Impatient of Deliberation when its Pleaſure is in view, and a taking Ima- *Inconſideration.*

gination over-rules whatever weak Plea Reaſon makes; Nay, what is worſe, the very diſuſe of Reaſon in Men abandon'd to the Conduct of Cuſtom, and ſway'd by the Enticement of Inclination, and Authority of Example, bereaves 'em almoſt of the Faculty it ſelf: So that their Life and Actions are not the Effects of Judgment and Deliberation; but injudicious, unweigh'd Cuſtom; or more raſh, heedleſs and precipitant Paſſion: And can any Man think, that when the meaneſt Art or Profeſſion is not learn't without Right Inſtruction or juſt Diligence, Wiſdom the great Art of Living Happily ſhou'd be attain'd without as much as juſt Conſideration? when a Man cannot grow Rich or Proſperous without Contrivance and Induſtry, is it probable he ſhou'd grow Happy by Inadvertency and Chance? it is impoſſible; for Innumerable will be the falſe and pernicious Notions which ſuch a one corrupted and deprav'd, raſh and unadvis'd muſt be betray'd into and confirm'd in, there is no Principle ſo falſe, no Practice ſo abſurd which ſuch do not

*Falſe Notions.*

not readily entertain: Hence 'tis that Men do ſo generally live by Rote, that Men's Principles are the faſhionable ones of the Neighbourhood or Nation, that their manner of Life takes that ſhape which their Rank and Quality, and the Chance of their Converſation gives it; and their very Religion it ſelf is the Native Commodity of the Soil they are planted in: Hence 'tis finally that Men are Unrighteous and Wicked, careleſs and unconcern'd, notwithſtanding all the Calls or Invitations, all the Rewards and Menaces of the Goſpel, Convictions of Conſcience, Impulſes of Grace, Mercies, Threats and Judgments of God: and Covetouſneſs, Luxury, Uncleanneſs, Prophaneneſs, Ambition are as conſtantly practis'd in Court and City as condemn'd in the Pulpit and Preſs; nor is it to be expected otherwiſe, for falſe Notions give Countenance and Authority to our Follies, and fortifie us in all our wretched Miſcarriages againſt the Aſſaults of Law and Reaſon, of Conſcience and God himſelf: No Condition is ſo deſperately forlorn as that of

Sin and Folly, back't and authoriz'd by Inveterate Principles! Theſe render our very Induſtry not only uſeleſs and unſerviceable, but even fatal and deſtructive to our Happineſs: theſe defeat the very tendency of our Nature towards Happineſs, and turning it into a wrong Channel, make it run with Violence toward our Miſery: theſe help to render our Paſſions both numerous and ungovernable by repreſenting ſome things as Evils which are not, and by augmenting real Evils beyond their Natural proportion: and herein conſiſt the very Eſſence and *being* of humane Miſery, or at leaſt a part of it, when our own folly encreaſes both the Number and Weight of Evils, and our numberleſs Paſſions do exceed all juſt and natural bounds: and this is a Conſtant truth, the leſs Underſtanding there is in any Man, the more violent is his Paſſion, the Paſſion of a Fool being like the Zeal of a Bigot, the more blind, the more furious. All this makes good the Obſervation of the * Poet,

*Ungovernableneſs and Impotence of Will.*

*Non*

*Non qui Sidonio contendere Callidus Oſtro,*
*Neſcit Aquinatem potantia vellera fucum,*
*Certius accipiet Damnum, propiuſq; Medullis,* Hor. l. 1. Ep. 1.
*Quàm qui non poterit vero diſtinguere falſum.*

*Not the Deluded Trader who doth buy*
*Counterfeit* Aquin *for the* Tyrian *dye,*
*His folly ſhall more ſurely or dearly Rue,*
*Than he who does, falſe Notions take for true.*

Inſincerity is another fruit of the Corruption of our Nature, and the Depravation of Education and Converſation. This is that which makes us Lazy in our ſearch after Truth, and Partial in the Examination of our Opinions and Actions; for when the bent of our Nature runs towards Carnal Pleaſures, and this is confirm'd by Education and falſe Notices of things, we ſhall be apt to take up and carreſs our *Inſincerity.*

our ſelves with preſent, eaſie and ready Entertainments. We ſhall not extend our Care or Proſpect very far, but be Content to enjoy the ſweet in every preſent Circumſtance and Event, without Regard to their future tendency, which was the Happineſs (if my memory deceive me not) of the *Cyrenaics*: the ſame diſtemper prevailing, we ſhall be apt to think every thing healthful that is pleaſant, and eaſily admit thoſe principles moſt true, which are moſt grateful to our Appetites. 'Tis not therefore to be wondred at, if the ſame Humour which makes us greedy of Embracing, make us obſtinate in defending pleaſing Errours. For the ſame Fondneſs and Partiality renders us incapable of Inſtruction, and Impatient of Advice, thô deſign'd by the moſt faithful Affection, and manag'd with the moſt Prudent Tenderneſs.

Hor. l. 1. Ep. 8.

*Fidis offendar Medicis, Iraſcar amicis*
*Cur me funeſto properant arcere veterno?*
*Quæ nocuere ſequar, fugiam quæ proſore credam.*

*The*

*The Plainneſs of Phyſicians and of Friends,*
*Thó by Affection mov'd and Truth, offends;*
*Can't I enjoy my Fatal Reſt for you?*
*Let me alone my Ruin to purſue*
*And fly my Happineſs.* ——

It is eaſie now to judge what muſt be the ſtate of that Man who is inſincere and falſe to himſelf in all his Deliberations, and Obſtinate in the Defence of his Errors, who is partial in all his own Reflexions, and Impatient of the faithful Reflexions of others: how is it probable that that Man ſhou'd attain to any Rational Happineſs who is uncapable of uſing his own Reaſon aright; or enjoying the benefit of another's.

*Levity and Inconſtancy.*

But 'tis not the only Miſchief we ſuffer by theſe Diſeaſes of the Mind that they render us uncapable of Diſcovering true Happineſs, they do alſo diſable us to purſue it when diſcover'd with that earneſtneſs and vigour which the Importance of the thing requires; for they muſt needs beget in us a ſloth-

ful

ful Remiſsneſs in our Endeavours, and an unhappy Levity and Inconſtancy in all our Deſigns and Purpoſes: 'tis very improbable that we ſhou'd be ſteady and immoveable in thoſe purpoſes which are not founded upon clear and ſolid Reaſon, or Zealous in ſuch as are encountred with violent Oppoſition from our ſelves: * Hence 'tis that the Scenes of Man's Life are ſo various, ſo frequently Chang'd, that every Man does ſo often ſhift his Perſon, and appear a very different Actor on the Stage. Thus we meet with *Epicurean* and *Stoic*, *Clergy-man* and *Merchant*, *Devoto* and *Stateſman*, *Enthuſiaſt* and *Paraſite*, all acted in their turn by the ſelf-ſame Man; who is toſt to and fro by the ſudden Sallies or Guſts of various Deſires and Paſſions. Nor is it any Man's Wit or Sagacity that turns him into all theſe different ſhapes, but his Vice and Folly, for being ignorant of the true good, the true

* *Quidam alternis Vatinii, alternis Catones; & modo parum illis Severus eſt Curius, parum pauper Fabricius, parum frugi & contentus vili Tubero. Modo Licinium Divitiis, Apicium Cœnis, Mecœnatem deliciis provocant. Maximum Judicium eſt malæ mentis Fluctuatio & inter ſimulationem Virtutum, amoremq; Vitiorum, aſſidua jactatio,* Sen. Epiſt. cxx.

true Happineſs of Man, he catches at fleeting Shadows, and Courts thin, airy Dreams, and uncertain Apparitions; and therefore daily ſets up New Projects, and thoſe too, repugnant to the Old: And thus, Man wearieth out himſelf by vain and unſucceſsful, becauſe unconſtant vaniſhing Attempts. This were tolerable, did it befall us only in Temporal things, whoſe Emptineſs makes our ſucceſs it ſelf fruſtration and diſappointment; but alas we ſuffer the ſame thing in the weighty Concerns of Vertue and Happineſs, our Religious purpoſes do generally die ſtrangled in the Birth, and all our glorious Deſigns daſh and break themſelves to pieces againſt the next Difficulty or Temptation; and yet relaps't into a ſtate of Folly, and Sin, and Danger, we would again return to that narrow Path whoſe ſteep and rough aſcent diſcourag'd us; wandring in Night, and Fogg and Storm, fain would we reach the Happy Region where calm light and chearful day does ever dwell: plainly and without a Metaphor, when we reſolve to be good and vertuous,

vertuous, we are kept from it by the ſeeming Eaſe and Pleaſure of Sin, and the hardſhips neceſſary to be undergone in the attainment of Vertue; and yet the Remorſe, and Danger, and Diſſatisfaction which do always accompany a Negligent and Sinful Life, make us wiſh for the Peace and Comfort, the Security and Rewards of Vertue. But, Oh! how ſeldom do we proceed further than wiſhes or ſome Attempts more lazy and diſ-ſpirited than our Wiſhes! The Reaſon's plain, Vertue is more Rational, Vice is more grateful; The Underſtanding is convinc'd, but the Will is enſlav'd; *The fleſh luſteth againſt the ſpirit, and the ſpirit againſt the fleſh.* A Sinner cannot purchaſe the Pleaſures of the Mind, but by ſome uneaſie Penances, and Severities of the Body, nor enjoy the Pleaſures of the Body without the Checks and Reproaches of the Mind; and this makes him unſteady and irreſolute in all his purpoſes.

*A Scheam or Repreſentation of the whole.*

Would you ſee an Inſtance of the whole Matter? you feel it, better than I can deſcribe it, and yet 'tis not difficult

cult to make a tolerable Repreſentation of that which I have in my ſelf often prov'd and often bewail'd: Nor can I ſee, why I ſhould bluſh to own thoſe frailties which are ſo incident to Humane Nature, that the greateſt Glory and Happineſs of mortal Man is not to have been never ſubject to 'em, but to have conquer'd 'em.

One while mov'd by the gaze and wonder, the reſpect and reverence, with which the World treats greatneſs, and by thoſe Opportunities of Pleaſure which I ſaw Wealth and Power put into Men's hands; I reſolv'd to rouze all the Strength, to imploy all the Force and Power of Mind and Body for the Attainment of Wealth and Greatneſs; I flatter'd my ſelf, I knew how to merit, nor did I think my ſelf uncapable of practiſing all the ſubtil humble Arts of Candidates and Dependents, could I once prevail with my ſelf to ſtoop to 'em; but when the toil and Difficulty and Meanneſs too of this attempt had given me a little diſguſt; and the Pleaſures of Friendſhip and Fortune, (by neither of which have

have I ever been utterly deſerted) incountred my Natural Inclinations to eaſe, and ſoftneſs, I ſoon exchang'd my former Notion of Happineſs for a more calm and quiet one: I began to think it wiſe to live to day, and to preſer my preſent Bleſſings in Poſſeſſion before the uncertain future ones of Opinion and Expectation. I wiſh't for an Opportunity to retire from every thing that might awaken my Ambition, or interrupt my quiet, and thought that in a lazy ſhade, and obſcure retreat, I might with moſt freedom and trueſt Contentment enjoy my ſelf, a cheap Pleaſure, and an humble Friend, and laugh at the Ambitious reſtleſs part of Mankind.

Sometimes ſpringing a thought of light, and loſt in the Pleaſure of a Speculation, I have reſolved to devote my ſelf entirely to a Studious Life, I ador'd the Memory of thoſe great Souls whoſe Works have given 'em an Immortality here below, I look't upon the Learned (as *Epicurus* words it) as Gods amongſt Men, I did not queſtion but Contemplation which once ſeem'd to me

me to be the Buſineſs of Angels, muſt needs be the Joy and Delight of Man, but alas! that I muſt ſay it, all that Learning which is purchas'd with toil and Difficulty is but a vain, uncertain Amuſement of the Mind, it has much of Pomp and Oſtentation in it, but is of very little uſe: I would it were not true that thoſe parts of Learning which are of moſt Uſe have leaſt of Certainty and Demonſtration, and thoſe which can juſtly pretend to moſt Certainty make Men the worſt Return of their Studies, and are of leaſt uſe. I have obſerv'd accordingly that the moſt Learned are not always the moſt ſerviceable to the World, not only for this Reaſon, but alſo Thoughtfulneſs and Retirement rendring Men very Commonly as unfit for as averſe to Buſineſs, bereaving 'em of that Sufficiency and Skill, that Addreſs and Preſence of Mind, which is not to be gain'd but by Converſation and Experience: and it was eaſie for me to remark that the active and buſie Man was not only more Skilful, but more Eloquent too than the Contem-

plative, as having a much clearer insight into the Humours and Passions of Men, and the secret Springs and Interests by which they are mov'd, and being able to manage 'em with a more popular Dexterity and more cleanly, gentile Insinuation. And now I began to esteem of Learning as a pretty Ornament of Life, but not fit to be the support of it, I thought it might serve to fill the void and empty spaces, but not to be the Business and Imployment of Life.

I have been sometimes ravish't with the Beauty of a Noble Action, and resolv'd to lead a Life severe and Vertuous, spent, not in private Ease, and lazy Divertions, but in the Honour and Pleasure of doing good. But good God! how weak is Nature! how slight are such Impressions! how numerous the Temptations! how prevalent the Inclinations which carry us another way!

This has been a long time my state, tost't on uncertain Seas, and hoysing Sail to every Wind that blew, and I find that neither greatness of Mind nor Fortune doth raise Men above this Incon-

Inconſtancy. For I meet with my own Reflexions, my own Paſſions in the Excellent * *Seneca*; only the Character of himſelf he there preſents us with, is expreſs'd with more life and briskneſs, and exalted as much above this of mine, as was the Nature and Station of that great Man above mine. I cannot ſay that I have yet made my Port, but I have diſcover'd it, and I Sail thô ſlowly, yet in a direct Line, having my Happineſs, *my Haven* all along in ken.

* *De Tranquillitate animi.*

*The Nature or Univerſal and Immediate Cauſe of Happineſs Inferr'd.*

From this Account of the Riſe and Progreſs of Man's Miſery, 'tis eaſie to infer what it is, wherein the Happineſs of this preſent life conſiſts, or at leſt what the Univerſal and Immediate Cauſe of it is, namely a Conformity of our Minds and Lives to true Reaſon and ſound Philoſophy; this is a ſtate of Light and Knowledge, of Peace and Security, of laſting and rational Delight, This inveſts the Underſtanding in its juſt Soveraignty and Dominion, and reſtores the *Will* to it's true Liberty, this makes our proſpect of the future taking and inviting, and our Re-

flexion on the time paſt eaſie and comfortable, This layes a ſolid foundation for our Reliance on the Merits and Interceſſion of our Mediator, and raiſes our Hope as high as Heaven; this prevents our Misfortunes and Calamities or, what is more Happy, enables us to Conquer 'em: In a word, this makes us great in Life, but much more great and venerable in Death, Righteouſneſs and Goodneſs revealing its Beauty and Glory moſt then, when all things elſe do ſhrink and fade.

*Two general Rules for attaining Happineſs inferr'd.*

We ſee the Happineſs that ſprings from our Conformity and Subjection to Reaſon, and 'tis eaſie from thoſe two things wherein eſpecially I have declar'd the Sinners Deviation from Reaſon to conſiſt, to inſer, what we muſt do, if we will live Rationally, Firſt,

1. 2. *We muſt propoſe to our ſelves a Wiſe and Rational End of Life.* Secondly, *We muſt purſue this End with Life, and Spirit, and Conſtancy.* Theſe I laid down as the firſt and moſt Comprehenſive Rules for the Attainment of Happineſs, I will therefore ſay ſomething of each, but briefly and in general

ral terms as the Nature of this Treatiſe requires.

Firſt, We muſt propoſe to our ſelves a Rational and wiſe End of Life; that is, the true Happineſs of a Rational Creature: When we have done this, when our Underſtandings are fully convinc't and perſwaded of the Excellence and Neceſſity of it, and when we have poſſeſs'd our Minds with a ſacred Reverence, a firm and devout Love for it: This like the Eaſtern Star the *Magi*, will lead us through all the windings and turnings of Life to *Bethlehem* and Happineſs; this will ſoon diſingage us from that *Labyrinth* of Contradictious Deſires and wild Opinions, in which the Fool and Sinner is endleſly entangled. When we have done this, we ſhall find every place a School, every one we Converſe with a Tutor, and every paſſage of our Life, or another's full of Inſtruction: Not a look whether Chearful or Melancholy; not a word whether wiſe or fooliſh; not a Sigh that an oppreſs'd Heart vents, not a Joy that ſmiles in the face but will teach us Philoſophy; ſhew us

the Uſe and Beauty of Divine Truth and Divine Vertue; for in the Vicious, we ſhall ſee what falſe and fading Pleaſures, what idle fears, what vain ſorrows, falſe Principles, and the Tyranny of Sin fills their Minds with; in the Good we ſhall ſee, what true Peace, Vertue creates in the Mind, what Conſtancy and Majeſty in the Life, what Courage and Hopes it inſpires in Affliction, what Magnanimity and Humility in Proſperity; and in a word, what Light, what Serenity it diffuſes through the whole Man: we ſhall ſee in many Inſtances every Day, what the Miſchief of irrational Deſires and ungovernable Paſſions are; and on the contrary, how great the Advantages, how charming the Beauty of Truth and Vertue, of Wiſdom and the Due Government and Regulation of all our Paſſions: Nor is the Inſtruction and Illumination of our Underſtanding promoted by every Accident which falls under our Obſervation, and by all ſorts of People, with whom we converſe: the only Advantage which we ſhall reap from the prefixing our ſelves a rational

tional End of Life, and the poſſeſſing our Souls with the Love of it; for when we have done this, we ſhall be actually freed from the greater part at leaſt of the Troubles and Calamities of Life, we ſhall be rais'd above all ſenſeleſs ſilly Deſires, and conſequently above all ſenſeleſs, ſilly Vexations and Griefs, and unmanly Complaints: for when we have ſet our Hearts upon true and rational Happineſs, how unneceſſary, nay how deſpicable will moſt of thoſe things appear which we now admire and Covet: we ſhall not then think it reaſonable to ſigh and toil for this Houſe or that Land, for this Preferment or that Trade, this Honour or that Beauty, for theſe are no Eſſential, no Neceſſary Ingredients of a Rational Happineſs. Nor is this all, thy Joys and Pleaſures will grow and increaſe upon thee; for by approaching every day nearer and nearer to thy great End, thou wilt be wonderfully ſurpriz'd with freſh Delight, whil'ſt thou do'ſt behold the fruit of thy Travail, the Advantage of thy Philoſophy, and the daily increaſe of thy Wealth: thou wilt

ſee thy ſelf, like a thriving Plant grow up daily more ſtrong and beautiful: the toil of others ſorts to no Happy End, The Covetous Man grows not Richer by Heaping up, nor the Ambitious Man greater by riſing higher, or at leaſt neither grows Happier by being either Richer or Greater; but thou wilt every day grow wiſer by ſtudy, more Vertuous by Practice, Calmer and Happier by both. O to what a height and Perfection will thy Pleaſure riſe, when thy ſtore ſhall grow big enough to Feaſt and Entertain not thy ſelf only, but all Men elſe; when the thirſty ſhall come and drink at thy Streams, and the ſcorch't ſhall refreſh themſelves under thy ſhade; when thou led by the ſame Spirit with our great Lord and Maſter ſhalt open the Eyes of the Blind, and the Ears of the Deaf, ſhalt caſt out Devils and ſtrengthen the Feet of the Lame; I mean, when thou ſhalt teach the fooliſh Wiſdom, when thou ſhalt perſwade and Charm the Obſtinate, when thou ſhalt deliver the Unclean and the Paſſionate from the Evil Spirits, the Vices that poſſeſs'd 'em,

'em, and when thou ſhalt teach the Enſlav'd and Impotent Sinner, how to overcome the World, the Fleſh, and the Devil, thou wilt then indeed, as thou art the Image, ſo do the Works of God, thou wilt be a Heavenly and Tutelar thô mortal Angel amongſt Men; and wherever *thou* doſt, there *Wiſdom*, *Vertue*, and *Happineſs* will dwell too. But to attain to this ſtate, 'tis not only Neceſſary to prefix our ſelves a Rational End of Life; But alſo

Secondly, We muſt purſue this End with Life, and Spirit, and Conſtancy. It is not a good Fit or a Devout Paſſion that will make us either Vertuous or Happy, there muſt go more than this to conquer an ill habit, or implant a good one; 'tis not one brisk Sally, or one warm Charge that will ſubdue the World and Fleſh, and put us into an entire Poſſeſſion of Victory and Security; No, when Warmth and Paſſion have made a proſperous Impreſſion on the Enemy, a ſober Patience muſt make good the ground we have gain'd, a ſteady and reſolved Courage muſt urge and preſs the Advantage to an Iſſue; without

without Vigour, Patience & Conſtancy to carry us ſtill forwards, the warmth and Paſſion with which we begin the Courſe of Vertue, will ſtand us in little ſtead; Ah! how many have march't out of *Egypt*, and periſh't in the Wilderneſs! how many have wreck't within ſight of Shore? How many have loſt their Reward of Repentance by their Relapſe and Revolt? how many have fallen by Negligence, Security, and Sloth into that wretched ſtate, out of which they had once deliver'd themſelves by Courage, and Reſolution, and Self-denial? Nor is the *Neceſſity* of Vigour, Patience, and Conſtancy, in our purſuit of Happineſs, the only Motive to it; the *Certainty of Succeſs* and the *Greatneſs* and *Eminence* of the Advantages, which attend it are ſufficient to animate and encourage any Man that ſeriouſly Conſiders it: the Labour and Hope of the Husbandman is loſt, unleſs the fruitful Earth, and fruitful Seed be bleſs'd with fruitful Seaſons too; The Trade of the Merchant is properly but Adventuring, and his increaſe depends as much on

Winds

Winds and Waves, and other as uncertain Chances, as on his own Skill and Diligence : Fortune muſt aſſiſt the Courage and the Conduct of the Soldier, or elſe Poverty and Diſhonour will be the only purchaſe of his Blood and hazard; But it fares not thus with Man in his purſuit of true Happineſs, the Traffick of the Philoſopher depends not upon Winds nor Tide, the Seeds of Vertue, if the Ground be well Cultivated will thrive in any Weather, and ſometimes better in Storms than Sunſhine, and finally the ſucceſs of our Conflicts againſt Sin and Miſery depends not on our Fortune, but our Courage and our Induſtry. How unſpeakable a Pleaſure is it now to think that we cannot be diſappointed in our Travails, nor defeated of our Hopes, while we Labour for Vertue and Happineſs, if our Endeavours be ſincere and perſevering, our ſucceſs is certain and unqueſtionable; but what an acceſſion doth this Pleaſure receive when we conſider, what will be the glorious fruit of this Succeſs, Tranquillity, Chearfulneſs, Greatneſs and Enlargement of Soul, Indolence,

dolence, Pleaſure, Life, Immortality, Security, and in one word Happineſs. O Glorious reward of our Conflict and our Victories! what neither Wealth nor Greatneſs, nor Honour nor Crowns; what neither Blood nor Toil, nor Cunning nor Fortune can give! that Rational and ſincere Endeavours after Wiſdom and Vertue will give the meaneſt Man upon Earth, that is, *Happineſs!* O Bleſſed Iſſue of Philoſophical, that is, truly Chriſtian Travail! the Rich, the Great, the Honourable, the Mighty may Complain even of their ſucceſs, and repent 'em of the Purchaſe they have made at too dear a Rate; but the Philoſopher, the Chriſtian can never repent of the ſucceſs of his Study, his Self-denial, his Patience, his Prayers: for how is it poſſible to complain of being Happy, or repent of being Wiſe and Vertuous? there is nothing Empty, nothing Evil, nothing Mean, nothing Uncertain in true Wiſdom, in Rational Happineſs.

This brief & general Account of Happineſs, & of the way to it, does naturally inſtruct us how we are to treat the *Body*,

*dy*, and what it is that a *Rational Education*, and *wiſe Converſation* ought to deſign and aim at, if our Conformity to Reaſon be either the Happineſs of this preſent Life or the Immediate Cauſe of it, (for I will not trouble my ſelf with Nice and ſubtle Diſtinctions in Moral Diſcourſes) then 'tis plain that we are oblig'd to ſuch a kind of Diſcipline and Government of our ſelves as may render the Body moſt Obſequious to the Mind, and may exalt and eſtabliſh the Power and Dominion of Reaſon; for whatever tends to obſcure our Underſtanding, to enfeeble the Will, to cheriſh our ſenſual Inclinations, and augment their force and violence, doth ſo far Neceſſarily tend to deprave the Nature of Man, and to ſubvert and o'rethrow his Happineſs; and from hence it appears that the Excellence of Educati n conſiſts in poſſeſſing the Minds of Youth with wiſe Principles, with true Notions of Good and Evil, and informing and moulding their Minds into an Eſteem and veneration for Wiſdom and Vertue. The firſt Vertue I conceive a Child capable of is Obedience, and this is indeed

deed the Foundation of all Vertue: to this let him be inur'd and train'd up betimes, he that finds it eaſie to obey another's Reaſon, will not find it difficult to obey his own; for when the judgment comes to be form'd and ripen'd, when it comes to exerciſe its Authority, it will find a Body not us'd to give, but receive Commands; from this vertue of Obedience he is to be led gently on to a Rational and voluntary Choice of what is good, he muſt be taught gradually not only his plain Duty, but the Motives to it; for it is as neceſſary to his Happineſs that he ſhould love, as that he ſhould know his Duty: But this we ſtrive in vain to inſtill by Art and Inſtruction, if we do not inſtill it by the Influence and Authority of wiſe and excellent Examples too.

As to Converſation 'tis plain, that it ought to be the Practice of thoſe Vertues which a Pious Education inſtill'd, and that we ought to have no leſs Reverence for our Reaſon, when we are at our own Diſpoſal, and under our own Government, than we had for the Authority

Authority of our Parents when we were under their's: what ought to be the tie and Ligaments of Friendſhip, what the Rules of Converſation, and what the great Ends of Society, is abundantly manifeſt from the Nature of that Happineſs which it behoves us to propoſe as the great End of Life; what is the great End of Man ought to be the Deſign of Society; and therefore 'tis plain that Wiſdom and Vertue ought to be the foundation and bond of thoſe Friendſhips which we enter into, voluntarily and of Choice, That Converſation ſhou'd be ſo regulated that we may grow by it more Wiſe and Vertuous, or at leaſt that our Diſcourſe, if it be not profitable ſhou'd be innocent, and that we ſhou'd do and ſay nothing in Company which we ſhou'd have Reaſon to bluſh at, or repent of in private.

I have now finiſh't this Diſcourſe which I deſign'd only as an Introduction to, or Preparative for thoſe which are to follow: I do not think, that 'tis now Neceſſary for me in a Pathetic Concluſion, to perſwade Men to endeavour

to

to be *Happy*; the Desires of Happiness are inseparable from all Beings, at least-wise 'tis impossible to be Rational and not desire to be Happy: if I have therefore sufficiently prov'd that 'tis possible to be Happy, and if I have shew'd that a diligent Enquiry, a vigorous and persevering Industry is Necessary to the Attainment of it; if I have pointed out the general Causes of Humane Misery, and together with 'em their general Cure and Remedy, I have done enough to enkindle those Desires & beget those Resolutions in my Reader, which if they do not make him actually Happy, will at least dispose and prepare him for a further Enquiry after Happiness, which was the utmost design of these Papers; I have therefore nothing more to put him in mind of now, but this, That as I do all along suppose the Grace of God Necessary to second and inforce our Reason, so I would ever be understood to urge and press the Necessity of our Prayers as much as that of our Endeavours, the Fervency of the one, as much as the Sincerity of the other.

*FINIS.*